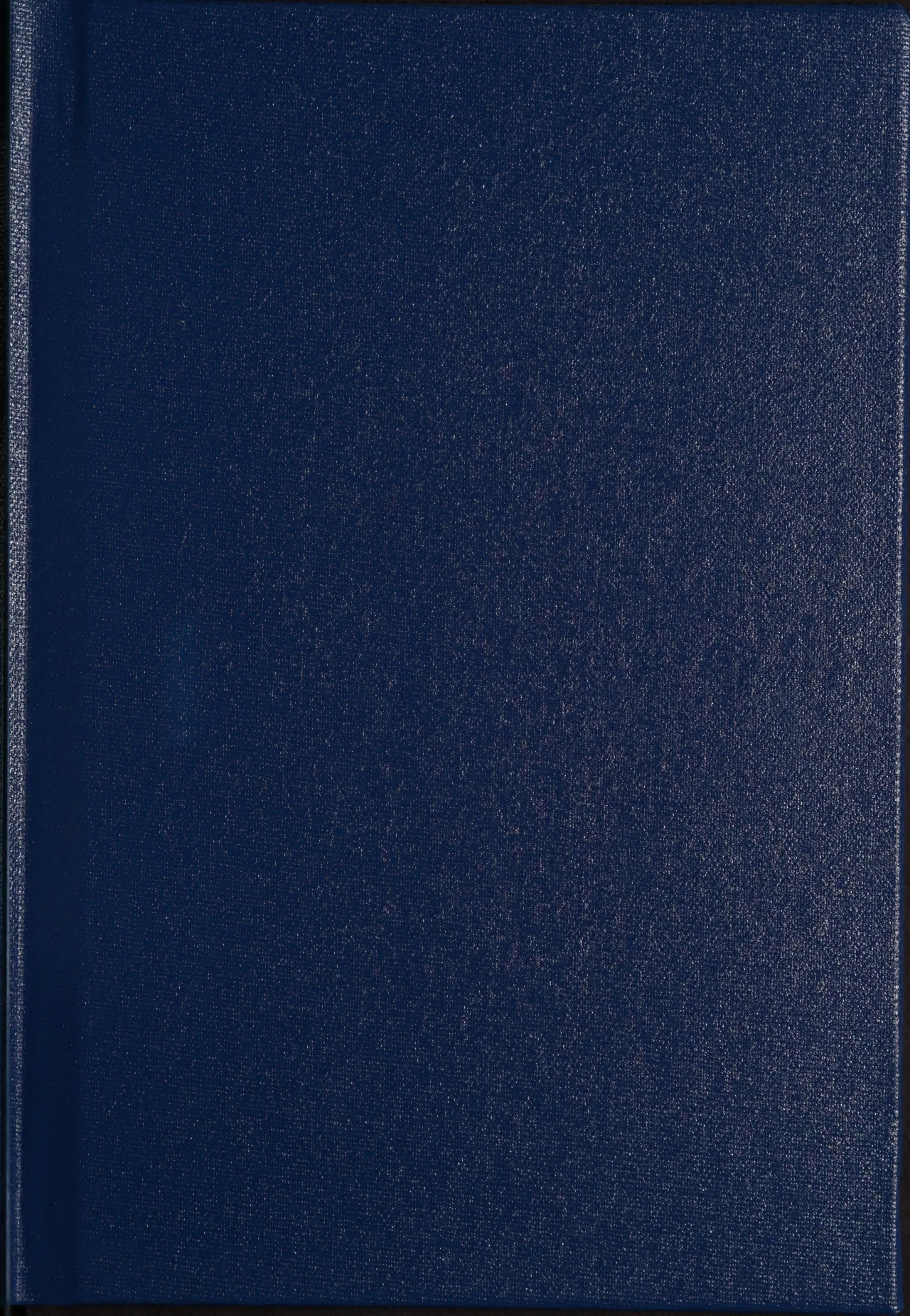
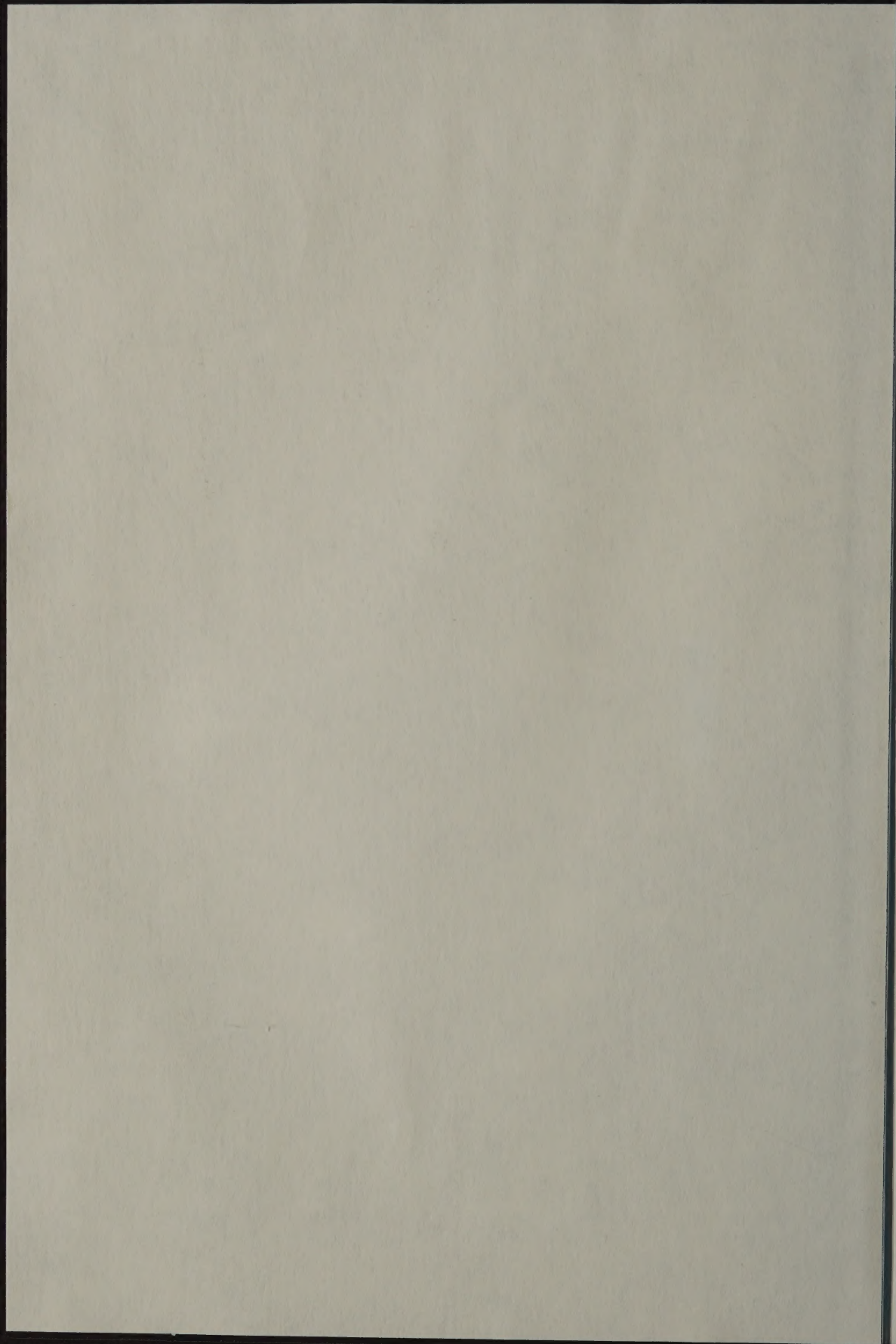




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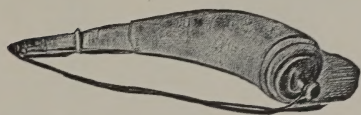
HISTORIC Old Fort Niagara



OLD FORT NIAGARA ASSOCIATION



Old
Fort Niagara





Pouchot's "Gate of the Five Nations"

THE STORY OF AN
ANCIENT GATEWAY TO THE WEST

Old Fort Niagara



by

Claud H. Hultzén, Sr.

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In the Beginning



ACCORDING to the Cherokee legend, after the animals, through the efforts of the humble little water-spider, had built up the earth and had come down from Galunlati beyond the arch, to live in the hills which in turn had been made by the great Buzzard, the father of all present buzzards, as he flew low over the soft mud and flapped his wings, digging out valleys and building up mountains; and after someone, no one knows who, had tied the four cords at the cardinal points of this big flat earth to the rocky anchorage of the heavens, the problem of heating and lighting the world presented itself. The animals, therefore, put the sun above the earth and set it in a track to go every day across the island of the earth from east to west just overhead. It was too hot this way and Tisiskagili, the crawfish, had his shell scorched and burnt red so his meat was spoiled. Accordingly, the conjurors kept putting the sun one handbreadth higher until it ran on its track seven handbreadths above the earth. It still passes across this path today through the Seventh Heaven.

Through the dark ages from the origin of this Cherokee legend until Fort Niagara came into being, many things happened. Civilizations were developed and exterminated. Vast populations grew into being and perished. Rare cultures evolved and dissolved before we have any accurate historical record of life leading up to the beginning of the Old Fort.

Undoubtedly this ancient triangle, marking the stepping off place of an alluvial plain in the bottom of prehistoric Lake Ontario, was the rendezvous of copper-skinned fishermen back in the days of Onguiara, the Attawandaronk Village just under the Niagara Escarpment; when Old Fortress Kienuka, the House of Peace, sat upon the edge of the escarpment, and when 400 years ago Dekanawida, Mohawk Chieftain and Hiawatha, the prophet, set about to organize the Iroquois group into the greatest confederation of native Americans.

Iroquois League

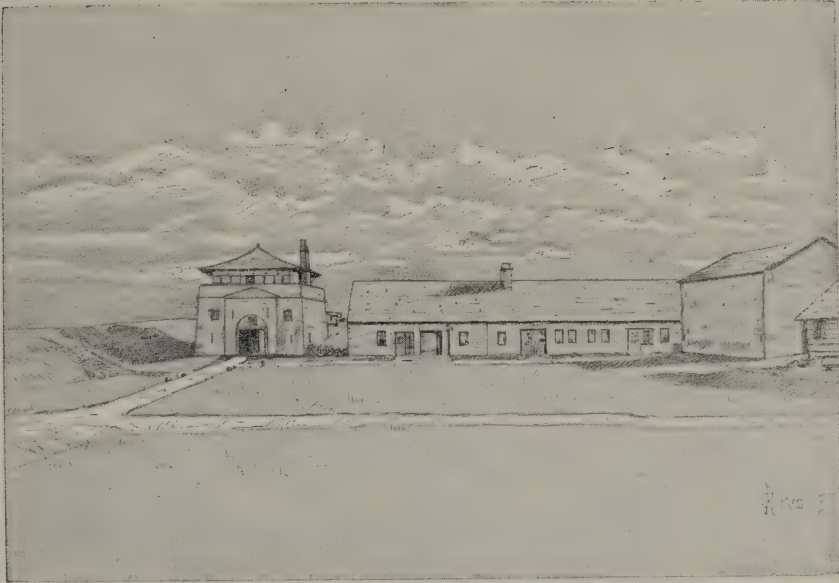
The story of Dekanawida, born of a mortal mother and a divine father according to Iroquois legend, and his disciple Hiawatha, is most entrancing. Hiawatha must not be confused with the Legendary Chippewa God, Nanabozbo, whose exploits have been immortalized by Longfellow under the name of "Hiawatha." The Iroquois Hiawatha was an Onondaga chief. The supreme compromise effected by Dekanawida and Hiawatha in bringing about unity between the nations is exemplary, and one of which our international diplomats today may take cognizance. It is said that the most bitter opponent Dekanawida and Hiawatha encountered was a powerful chief of the Onondagas called Atotarho or Wathatotarho, a man of great force of character, haughty, crafty, and remorseless, possessing Orenda (magic) of great power. Tradition describes him as a monster from whose head grew instead of human hair, great serpents whose terrible folds enveloped his body. By his strategy Atotarho prevented Hiawatha from addressing the Onondaga Council, of which he, Atotarho, was chief. By his magic arts he brought about the death of Hiawatha's seven daughters.

It was not until the tribes of the Mohawks, the Oneidas, the Senecas and the Cayugas had joined the Confederacy that Atotarho and the Onondagas were won over; and their consent to enter the League was gained only by granting them unusual concessions. It was agreed that the Onondagas should be the leading nation of the Confederacy; that their chief town should be the Federation capital where the great council of the League should be held and where its records should be preserved; and that the Onondaga Nation should be represented in the Council by thirteen senators while no other nation had more than ten. It was further agreed that no act of the Federation Council to which the Onondagas objected should be valid. Furthermore, to enhance the personal dignity of Atotarho, five Federal chiefs were designated as his special aides.

Following are the three great double doctrines or principles upon which the Iroquois Confederacy was founded:

- (1) (a) Health of mind and body.
(b) Peace among individuals and groups of individuals.
- (2) (a) Righteousness in conduct; its advocacy in thought and speech.
(b) Equity in the adjustment of rights and obligations.
- (3) (a) Physical strength or power; order.
(b) Orenda, or magic power, of people and institutions.

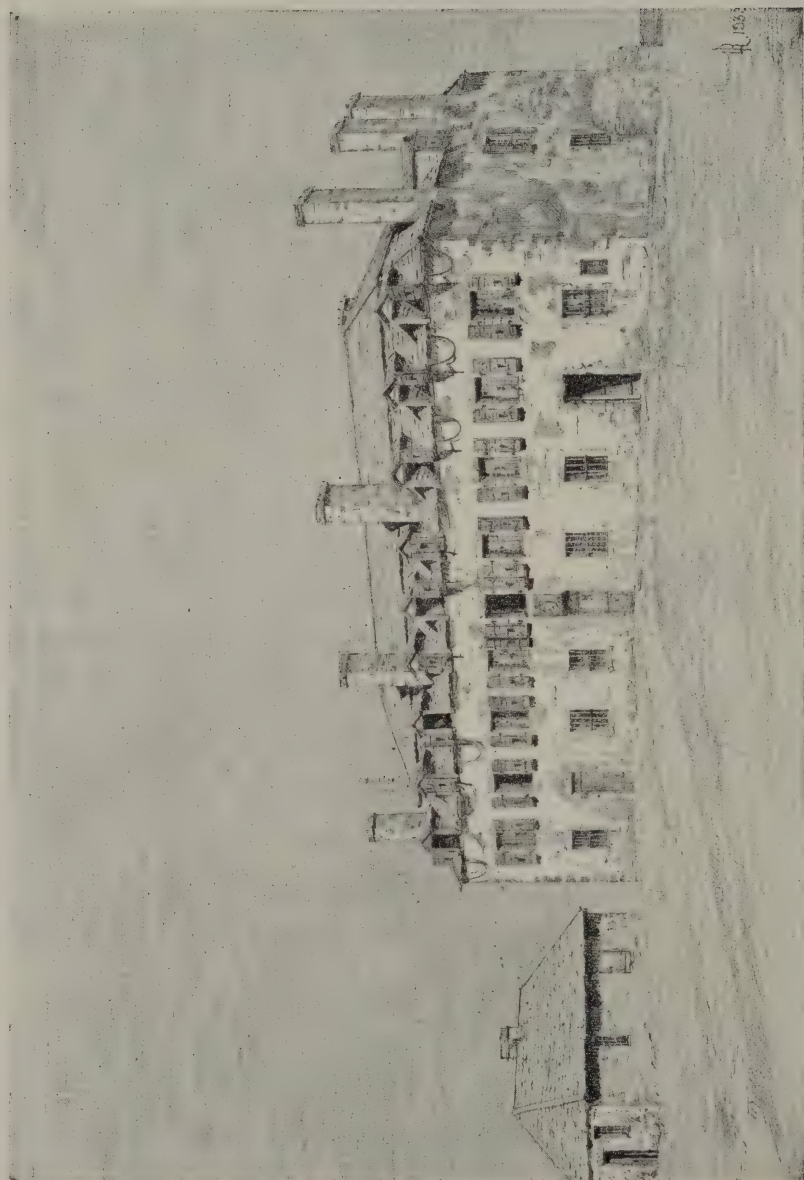
Based upon this code, Dekanawida and Hiawatha built a mighty political unit



Across the Ancient Parade

which had for its purpose its own preservation. It was complete in every phase according to the requirements of the stone age in which it took place. It was a model social order which evolved a culture in many ways superior to white man's culture of the day, according to many anthropologists. Its democratic form of government more nearly approached perfection than any that has been tried to date. It is claimed by many that the framers of the Constitution of the United States of America copied from these Iroquois practices in founding the Government of the United States.

The essence of the great experiment of Dekanawida and Hiawatha lies not in the fact that their League was based upon such ideal doctrines, but rather in the fact that over a period of 400 years that form of government and social order worked successfully, the five great nations of the Iroquois living over all that period in harmony and accord, banded together for internal preservation and external strife. It was this formidable organization of civil government planned upon such a firm foundation with which the French and the British and the early Americans were to contend in the winning of a new land.



de Lery's "Castle"

Bearers of the Cross



THE story of Old Fort Niagara essentially is the story of the conquests and the conflicts of four of the world's greatest nations, the Iroquois Confederacy, France, England and the United States. The story is replete with the throbbing ambitions, the kindly gentleness, the awful tragedies, the great glory of the men and women who served these nations. Histories of nations are the biographies of their people. The cumulative biographies of the people who served their respective countries directly or indirectly through Old Fort Niagara, provide a most romantic story through periods of struggle and strife to the world's most exemplary lasting peace.

Fired with the zest of new opportunity of expression, keyed with the imagination and romance of things spiritual, the bearers of the Cross were the first to press onward to Niagara.

It is difficult in this day and age to picture the Niagara Frontier region of the early 17th century, a vast wilderness upon which no white man had placed foot and yet an age-old rendezvous of the Iroquois-Huron Indians.

Some historians give credence to the story that Etienne Bruslé, interpreter to Champlain, crossed the Niagara in September, 1615, while on a trip from Lake Simcoe, Ontario, to visit the Andaste Indians, who were located to the south on the Susquehanna River, thereby to become the first white man to visit the Niagara Frontier. However, the first accurate record of white man on Niagara soil is that of Father Joseph de la Roche Dallion, Franciscan priest of the Recollect form. Father Dallion had been in missionary service among the Hurons to the north, and also had been trading in the interest of France. He determined to carry his activities to the southward among the Attawandaronks or Neuter Indians, as they later were called by the French. The Attawandaronks at the time held the territory along the north shore of Lake Erie, and across the Niagara River with their most easterly boundary somewhere near the present site of the city of Lockport, N. Y. Their principal village was that of Onguiara, just beneath the Niagara escarpment on the site of Lewiston, N. Y. It is said that the name "Niagara" is derived from the Attawandaronk "Onguiara."

Niagara's First White Man

Dallion set out from the country of the Hurons, accompanied by two Frenchmen, Grinole and Havaleé, and tramped through the woods around the west end of Lake Ontario to the Niagara peninsula in the land of the Attawandaronks. He was well treated by the Indians, given venison, squash and parched corn. At first the Attawandaronks were in awe of the long flowing robes of the priest. Their curiosity in seeing such unusual garments perhaps was responsible for their favorable treatment of the strange visitor. Dallion told them he had come in behalf of the great empire of France to contract an alliance and friendship and to trade with them. Thus came about the first recorded trade of the Niagara region when Dallion presented the chiefs with "little knives and other trifles."

Father Dallion apparently made a very good impression among these Indians for they adopted him into their tribe and, as was a customary tradition, they immediately provided him with a father, it being a somewhat logical, if childlike, fancy of these Indians that adopted "children" of the tribe should have some parental influence. Father Dallion's acquired Attawandaronk parent was the Chief Souharissen.

From the Attawandaronks Father Dallion learned of a great river to the east which emptied into the lake. He journeyed in this direction until he reached the Iroquois Frontier; and so he established the date of 1626 as making the first authentically recorded visit of a white man to the Niagara.

Soon, however, the Hurons, jealous of the Attawandaronks, turned against Father Dallion and spread the news that the priest was a maker of "bad magic" and that his "medicine" would ruin the Indian tribes. This resulted in the Attawandaronks mistreating Father Dallion almost to the extent of murdering him. News of this reached his friends at the Huron mission, and Grinole, who had returned to this post, set out in search of the adventurous missionary. He found Father Dallion and early in 1627 they returned to the Huron mission.

St. John de Brébeuf

From the time of Dallion's trip to the Attawandaronks there is no record of white men having visited this section until 1640. On November 2, of that year, Father Jean Brébeuf, now St. John de Brébeuf, and Father Joseph Chaumonot, two Jesuit priests, set out on the tiresome journey from a Huron mission, resolved to carry

the Cross to the Attawandaronks. They passed through what are now the towns of Beeton, Orangeville, Georgetown, Hamilton and St. Catharines, Ontario, and reached the Niagara River just north of the present site of Queenston, Ont. They had been deserted by their interpreter; Huron scandal had preceded them, the word having been passed that the missionaries were magicians and carried all manner of evils with them.

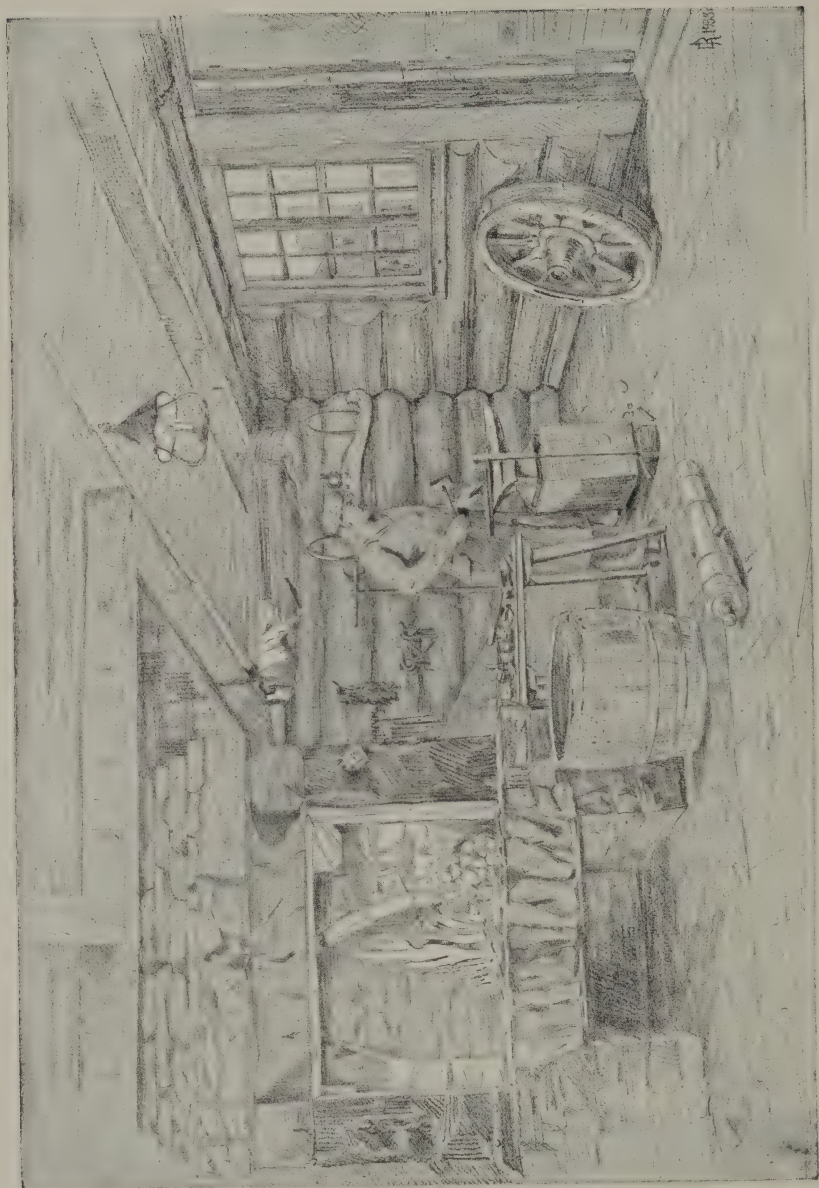
Weary and footsore, but grimly determined in their mission, Brébeuf and Chaumonot entered the hostile Attawandaronk Village of Onguiara, set up their portable altar and proclaimed to the red men their mission of peace and good will. A new deity presented in a strange tongue through equally strange men, did not meet with the approval of the Attawandaronks. Far into the winter they abused Brébeuf and Chaumonot. On one occasion, it is related, an Attawandaronk chief raised his tomahawk over Chaumonot with the announcement that he was tired of the dark meat of his Iroquois enemies, and that he would like to taste the white meat of the Frenchman. Brébeuf, of great physical stature, majestically calm, bearing that fine type of courage which appealed most to the Indian, managed to dissuade him.

Finally, by February, 1641, Father Brébeuf realized the fallacy of any attempts to convert the Attawandaronks and the two priests started out to retrace their steps toward Huronia.

Cold, half-starved, wading in deep snow, they tramped through the woods until they came to a cluster of bark lodges. Father Chaumonot, worn with travel and cold, took recourse in sleep, while Father Brébeuf, to escape for a time the acrid and pungent smoke that filled the cabin, went outside to commune with God; alone in prayer. He moved toward the margin of the woods. Suddenly he stopped as if transfixed. Far away to the northeast, high in the air, and boldly outlined, a huge cross was suspended. Was it stationary? No, it moved toward him from the land of the Iroquois. The saintly face lighted with unwonted splendor for he saw the vision which presaged a martyr's crown. Truly it did. Exactly eight years later the gallant priest was tortured to death at the stake at St. Ignace.

It was in the early part of the 20th century that the martyrdom of Brébeuf was recognized. He was beatified by the Holy See on June 2, 1925, and canonized on June 29, 1930.

The experiences of Dallion and Brébeuf and Chaumonot were the forerunners of the important parts played by the priesthood both at Fort Niagara and the territory which it served.



The Forge, Artificer's Cabin

Soldiers or Craftsmen



ABOUT one decade after Father Jean Brébeuf had left the Niagara Frontier in 1641, the Iroquois Indians spread devastation through the land of the Attawandaronks, practically annihilating that nation, and adopting its straggling remnants into their own tribes. Thus the Iroquois, particularly the Seneca tribe, became the holders of the Niagara Frontier. The Senecas had no permanent town in this section but apparently used it, particularly east of the River, as a rendezvous for war parties and fishing expeditions.

There is no record of white men having visited the frontier at the Niagara River between 1641 and 1669, when on July 6th Father François Dollier De Casson and Father René Bréhant de Galinée, Supitian missionaries, left Montreal for the west with nine canoes and equipment. With them was a young adventurer of Rouen, named René Robert Cavelier de La Salle. He was 26 years old. The party passed along the southern shore of Lake Ontario stopping at different places and meeting with many adventures, finally passing the mouth of the Niagara River. They continued on to the head of the lake and started overland, where they were met by Joliet. La Salle returned with Joliet to Montreal, while the missionaries continued on a westward journey.

René Robert Cavelier de La Salle

The story of La Salle, who has been called one of the greatest explorers of all time, is a long one. In whatever form written it is interesting because the simple facts of his experience are romantic almost beyond the imagination of writers of fiction. In fact, this story was written in historical novel form by Gilbert Parker in a most interesting book called "The Power and Glory, or the Romance of the Great La Salle." His life was fraught with hardships. Imbued with great ideals, possessed of a vision far beyond the comprehension of most of those with whom he had to deal, and bitterly opposed by some who should have been his greatest support, he carried on through a series of misfortunes which finally ended in death at the hands of his own companions somewhere in the valley of the lower Mississippi. His vision and his work were not in vain, however, for his efforts to establish a com-

merce on the Great Lakes and to open up the waterway to the west brought the attention of the whole civilized world to this task.

La Salle's visit to the Niagara River in 1669 and subsequent studies made by him, brought to the young explorer his great vision of a new commerce to the westward and the building up of a vast empire for France. In May, 1675, the French Government granted him certain privileges. These concessions were so awarded that La Salle not only assumed the burden of carrying out the plan within the short period of five years, but it was a "privilege" granted him provided he assumed all expense attendant thereto. The odds were greatly against him. However, he had great faith in his purpose and perhaps too much faith in many of his followers. Among the few men who, throughout La Salle's explorations, remained steadfast to his interest, was his Lieutenant, Henri Tonti, often referred to as "the man with the iron hand."

This appellation was given Tonti because he in fact had an artificial right hand. It is said to have been during the siege of Messina in 1677 that his right hand was torn away by a grenade. Some writers declare that he received a sabre stroke on the wrist, was made prisoner and that he cut off the wounded hand with a knife without the services of a surgeon. Bacquille de la Potherie in his history published in 1722, speaking of Tonti's metal member, says in part: "The Indians greatly feared it. They called him the 'Iron-arm' (*bras-de-fer*); he often knocked their heads and teeth with a blow from the fist when he had difficulty (*démêlés*) with them. They did not know at first that he had this wrist of copper."

The First Ship

In 1678 from Fort Frontenac, La Salle started his adventure for the development of a fur trade to the west and south. First he sent a small group of men to the Upper Lakes with goods for trade and on November 18, 1678, he sent 16 men, ship carpenters, blacksmiths and other artisans to the Niagara to build a vessel above the Falls in which to continue his explorations. Under the command of *Sieur de la Motte* and accompanied by the missionary Father Louis Hennepin, they reached the mouth of the Niagara River on December 6th. On the 15th they sailed and towed their brigantine up the river to the present site of Lewiston and devoted the next three days to building a store house which they surrounded with palisades. This was the first building of the white man on the Niagara River. La Motte, Hennepin and four

French companions set out from the new store house on Christmas day, the same year, to visit the Seneca tribes 80 miles to the eastward and to obtain from them permission to build the ship. They were unsuccessful.

La Salle, who through the recent arrangement had charge of Fort Frontenac (the present site of Kingston, Ontario), with Tonti, set out for Niagara with supplies and materials to build the proposed vessel. On the way La Salle stopped at the Seneca Village and obtained permission to build his ship, despite the fact that La Motte and Hennepin had failed in this mission.

Disaster set in. Halfway between the mouth of the Genesee and the Niagara, La Salle and Tonti left the ship and proceeded overland, a more rapid mode of travel.

It was not enough, it seems, that the young explorer and his soldier friend with their handful of followers should be facing the difficult problem of building a ship in the enemy-infested wilderness. The crew which La Salle and Tonti left aboard the ship headed for the Niagara River, abandoned the vessel on a warm afternoon and left her anchored while they went ashore for a pleasant slumber. A storm tore her from her moorings and with all of the supplies, representing La Salle's fortune and what money he had been able to borrow, she pounded on a reef and went to the bottom of Lake Ontario.

Even as his brigantine sank in Lake Ontario, La Salle and Tonti crossed the mouth of the Niagara River and dined with friendly Indians at what is now Niagara-on-the-Lake. By midnight moonlight they journeyed up the trail to the cabin of La Motte and Father Hennepin. The following day La Salle left Tonti and explored the Upper River, locating the site upon which to build his new ship. It was on the east bank of the Niagara just south of Cayuga Creek, in the section of the city of Niagara Falls which now bears his name. At this time the young explorer had his first glimpse of the mighty Cataracts of Niagara.

Undismayed by the loss of his supplies, on January 22, 1679, La Salle with Tonti and Hennepin and his crew of artisans, began the work of building cabins and a chapel of logs and bark on the site of the shipyard.

It is not difficult to realize the hardship of living in hastily constructed and flimsy structures on the Niagara Frontier during the month of February.

Despite these hardships La Salle put the laying of the keel of the boat under way on January 26th and returned to Fort Frontenac for more supplies and finances.



Grim Ramparts that Served Three Nations

La Salle did not personally supervise the building of the *Griffon* (for this was the name of the ship), but left this to Tonti, who continued the construction throughout the winter and spring of 1679. A man by the name of Hillaret, according to some historians, was the chief craftsman.

Fortunately most of the Senecas in this district were absent on an expedition south of Lake Erie and only a few stayed around the shipyards. These latter, however, stood ready to plunder. An attempt is said to have been made to kill the blacksmith. The red intruder was repulsed by a red-hot iron bar in the hands of the smithy, this product of the forge apparently having been as effective as Tonti's iron hand. There also was a plan on the part of the Senecas to burn the boat but the plot is said to have been revealed by a Seneca woman who was a friend of one of the workmen.

The work was continued and the hull was launched in May. Tonti received orders to sail the *Griffon* through the Lakes and to notify the Illinois Indians that he was coming to live with them by the King's order. Tonti was unable to get the boat through the rapids at the outlet of Lake Erie and he brought her to anchor under the shelter of Squaw Island. La Salle returned to Niagara in August and found his boat

ready to sail, but was told that his men were unable to get her into the Lake. La Salle made them all debark, 30 persons including three Recollect missionaries, with arms, provision, merchandise and eight little cannon of cast iron or brass. Finally he reached the Lake by the aid of a strong wind and towing on the part of some of the men.

No one knows just how the *Griffon* looked. Tonti mentions it as a 40-ton ship. Father Hennepin refers to it once as a 45-ton and once as a 60-ton boat. At all events it was a sailing vessel and the first on the upper lakes. As far as it concerns the history of the Niagara Frontier it is sufficient to note that further disaster came to La Salle with the sinking of the *Griffon* while sailing the first mission of commerce on America's inland seas beyond Lake Ontario. Of ship or crew naught has been heard.

Fort Conti

Just how long ago that triangular point of land lying between Niagara River and Lake Ontario in the United States has been used for human habitation is unknown. Authorities declare that early reference to this site indicates it as a barren plateau and the supposition is that early camp fires of the Attawandaronks or perhaps their predecessors in this territory, caused this point to be barren of the heavy timber growth which marked the balance of the section.

The first recorded habitation on this point, however, was Fort Conti. The Prince of Conti was the one who had recommended Henri Tonti to La Salle, and it was in honor of the Prince that La Salle named his first habitation on the site of Old Fort Niagara.

La Salle had realized the importance of a building at the mouth of the Niagara River which not only would house merchandise brought by ship from Fort Frontenac for passage to the west over the portage, but that would be fortified against possible attack from the Senecas or other Indians, and would control for the French all Indian trade passing down the Niagara toward the English and Dutch in the east. So, after having started the building of the *Griffon* and while on his return trip to Frontenac afoot, he took Henri Tonti as far as the mouth of the Niagara and there traced the lines of the Fort. Tonti did not build the Fort. Actual construction was left to a force of men under Domenique de La Motte-Lussiere. On August 22, 1682, La Salle, at Fort Frontenac, wrote his supporters concerning this first fort at Niagara:

"The Iroquois did not oppose the construction of the Fort commenced at the discharge of Lake Erie (La Salle referred to the entire Niagara River as the discharge), but the loss of the first bark having obliged me to use most of my men during the whole winter for the transportation of what I had left from it, I contented myself with making there two redoubts, 40 feet square, upon a point, made of great timbers one upon another, musket proof and joined by a palisade, where I put a sergeant and several men, who during my absence allowed all this work to burn through negligence; and not being in condition to restore it, there remains only a magazine." And thus is found briefly in the words of La Salle, the history of the building, garrisoning and the destruction of the first fortification on the site of Old Fort Niagara.

Procès-Verbal

In reciting ever so briefly the history of René Robert Cavelier de La Salle and his followers, in so far as it concerns the Niagara Frontier, it is well at least hurriedly to scan the reports of their activities to the west and to the south. These are the explorations which mark the beginning of the vast western French Empire for which La Salle had planned from the start, and over which Niagara later was to rule.

As was previously noted, La Salle's adventures in the west consistently were fraught with disaster. Throughout these trying experiences, he was a giant of courage and a marvel of physical endurance. In one instance we find record of him having traveled more than 1,000 miles by canoe and on foot in 65 days.

From the time of the sailing of the *Griffon* in 1679, until the fall of 1683, the adventurer of Rouen was engaged in pushing westward and southward, claiming great stretches of country in the name of the King of France, and conducting a scattered and usually unprofitable trade with the red men.

To the westward La Salle and his followers had claimed the valley of the Illinois, the Mississippi and the territories adjacent to the Great Lakes; to the southward the lands of the Miamis. In 1682 La Salle reached the Arkansas and took formal possession by civil and religious ceremonies and the raising of a cross, the Procès-Verbal (customary proclamation of discovery). The following month similar ceremonies were held at the mouth of the Mississippi and La Salle named this new territory Louisiana.

It is singular that La Salle apparently never made any priority claims on the Niagara Frontier, nor in the north; though in 1669, the two priests with whom

he first visited the Niagara River, Galinée and de Casson, took formal possession on the north shore of Lake Erie, somewhere in the vicinity of Long Point.

Here and there over the great expanse of country included in La Salle's explorations, the pioneer and his men had built trading and supply posts. True, they were few and far between—so far between that communication was exceedingly difficult—but they represented a nucleus for that cordon of trading posts down the Ohio and the Mississippi and on the Lakes to the westward, to all of which later Fort Niagara was the key.

Thus La Salle's empire as he left it in the fall of 1683. The great explorer returned eastward at that time from having spent the winter on the Illinois fortifying Starved Rock. In the meantime, Count Frontenac, his staunch friend, had been recalled and La Barre had been made Governor of Canada. The new Governor, who was no friend to Robert Cavelier, confiscated the latter's property and so stood in his way that the gallant La Salle returned to France, never again to visit the Niagara Frontier.

Today La Salle's Empire has expanded and developed far beyond his fondest dream. In fact, La Salle in the 17th century could not possibly have visualized the great middle west of the 20th century.

Just to depart for the moment from the chronological relation of events as they slowly evolve to frame the destinies of the Niagara Frontier, to consider briefly the men whose thoughts and actions form the historical fact. What of the followers of La Salle? Brief reference has been made to Henri Tonti, his faithful lieutenant, and to Father Louis Hennepin, the priest and perhaps well-intentioned but sometimes exasperating historian. But what of the rank and file—and those between, the junior subalterns? Were they good men—or bad? They were both, as we measure virtue and corruption. A few were most honorable and loyal to their leader. Many of them turned out to be deserters and thieves.

Writing of the crew which sailed the *Griffon* into Lake Erie in 1679, one historian says: "It was a strangely mixed lot; a few gentlemen, soldiers who had proved themselves in service, missionary priest, craftsmen, mechanics and dubious habitants who only needed opportunity to turn villain. By no means least in evidence in the motley crew was Moyse Hillaret, ship carpenter. Another carpenter, François Sauvin, was called La Rose; a blacksmith, Le Meilleur, is oftener mentioned as La Forge; others were La Violette; Martin Chartier; Duplessis; Jacques Monjault; La Rousseliere; Baribault; Lacroix. Highly poetic, some of the names, but a more rascally and unfaithful crew never sailed."

The same historian has it that some of these men were afraid of the Indians, which might well be true. During the time that they were building the *Griffon* the Indians were none too friendly.

Hillaret, the carpenter, was a ring leader in agitation among the craftsmen on the ship. Father Hennepin writes that the man was on the point of deserting the shipyards and taking with him the balance of the carpenters into New York. The good priest in the same paragraph claims credit for having stayed the rebellion by appealing to the men during services.

There is no doubt that Father Hennepin and other priests held great influence over these men, as they were staunch in their religion. On the other hand, it took much more bravery to run away into the wilderness than it did to stick to camp and follow the crowd in those days.

"Among the more trusty who stood with La Salle as he sailed into Lake Erie," our historian further says, "was Jacques Bourdon, the Sieur Dauntary, son of Jean Bourdon, first procurer-general of Quebec; 'always very faithful,' La Salle said of him." Others were Andre Henault; Collin, Michael Accault and Antoine Auguel; the Parisian, the Sieur de Boisrondet; La Chapelle; Noell Le Blanc; Pierre You; L'Espérance, La Salle's servant and a few Indians.

Perhaps this list of men will give a fair cross section of the types of early Frenchmen on the Niagara Frontier. They were of the many kinds who make up the world.

In La Salle's Footsteps

Adventure! Romance! Down through the pages of Niagara Frontier history there are few paragraphs more important, though many are more voluminous, than those which all too briefly tell the story of the youths of the late 17th century, who followed in the wake of the great La Salle, inspired by his daring and the possibilities of wealth and fame. Their aim perhaps was less to explore than to capitalize the opportunities to exchange with gullible red men worthless trinkets for valuable furs.

Young men in numbers entered into the fur trade without license or Government permits, greatly to the chagrin of authorized operators. In 1682 there was a serious outbreak of this nature. The Colonial Government found it most difficult to cope with their reckless, outlaw *coureur de bois*. The mouth of the Niagara River, though La Salle's Fort Conti several years previously had been destroyed by fire, was a point of rendezvous for the *coureur de bois* and the Indians.



Site of Fort Denonville

La Barre, Governor of Canada, prompted by the request of Sieur de La Chesnaye, who had a large licensed fur trade, issued an order to the Iroquois, giving them permission to appropriate the goods and furs of French voyageurs whom they might encounter, unless the traders could show passports such as the sample which he sent to the Indians.

La Chesnaye suffered along with the unlicensed traders from this order, for some of his canoes, their occupants having mislaid or lost their passports, were seized by the Senecas. Though efforts were made to recover the goods, the Indians simply retorted that they were carrying out the Governor's orders.

Much of this sort of banditry took place on the Niagara. It was a point of vantage far too important to be overlooked by any who wished to have a share in the western fur trade. The result of this piracy was a series of conflicts between the white traders and the Iroquois. Little has been written of these minor engagements, but they were of sufficient importance to enrage the Indians, and, as one historian quotes a memoir of the time: "Behold, the first preliminary step to the cruel war which we have sustained in consequence, and which has even threatened the abandonment of the colony."

English Interest

While so far this sketchy relation of Niagara Frontier history has dealt with the French, we soon shall have to consider the English, and to some extent the Dutch, who in their trading posts down Lake Ontario and in lower New York, at this time began to realize the importance of the control of western fur trade through the Niagara.

"Description de la Louisiane"—the first and perhaps the most reliable work of Father Louis Hennepin—was published in a Paris printing shop in 1683. Its effect was to bring to the attention of the French and English, much more forcefully than ever before, the significance of the western colonial fur trade and incidentally the importance of Niagara.

Almost simultaneously, Dongan, the English Governor of New York, and René de Brassay, the Marquis de Denonville, Governor of New France, urged their respective home governments to fortify the Niagara. In the meantime, England and France had effected a treaty, signed at Whitehall, November 26, 1686, whereby they were pledged to maintain peace between their respective colonies in America, but whereby "neither should interfere with the other in his warfare upon 'wild Indians'."

Dongan the previous year set out to establish trade in the west, sending a detachment of traders through the Niagara route. These Englishmen, headed by Abel Marion la Fontaine, a deserter from the French colonies, were the first white men except the French to enter the Niagara River.

Fort Denonville

With a loophole in the treaty clause concerning Indian warfare, Denonville, having received authority from the French King to build a fort at Niagara, set out on his famous campaign against the Iroquois, his main objective being to build the post. Durantye, Tonti (La Salle's old faithful lieutenant) and Du Lhut, at Denonville's orders, had gathered a large party of Indians and French habitants from the west. They met Denonville's large forces on the south shore of Lake Ontario and proceeded to attack the Iroquois. The Indians were too wary for Denonville and he succeeded only in stirring up and infuriating the red men. He did, however, destroy three villages and, it was reported, 1,200,000 bushels of corn. This destruction of property, especially the sacred corn, and killing of Iroquois, as shall be noted later, were to be regretted by Denonville's men who were left to garrison the new fort at Niagara.

Having returned to the lake shore with his forces, Denonville proceeded at once toward the mouth of the Niagara, arriving at that point at five o'clock in the morning, after a moonlight trip during the night of July 30, 1687. Of interest is the fact, according to de Tregay, lieutenant of the garrison, and its surviving Commanding Officer, that the Marquis was accompanied by his wife, who, therefore, undoubtedly was the first white woman to visit Fort Niagara.

Realizing, as had La Salle, the great strategy of the spot, Denonville set about to build a fort on the same site on which the explorer's lieutenants had erected Fort Conti nine years before. The Marquis, "being not too modest," as some historians have reflected, named the fort Denonville, after himself, although it was better known as the "Fort at Niagara."

Quoting from Peter A. Porter's book, "A Brief History of Fort Niagara": "Baron La Hontan was among the officers of Denonville's command, and he describes the work as a "fort of pales, with four bastions," and says it "stands on the south side of the Straits of Herrie (Erie) Lake, upon a Hill, at the foot of which that Lake falls into the Lake of Frontenac (Ontario)."

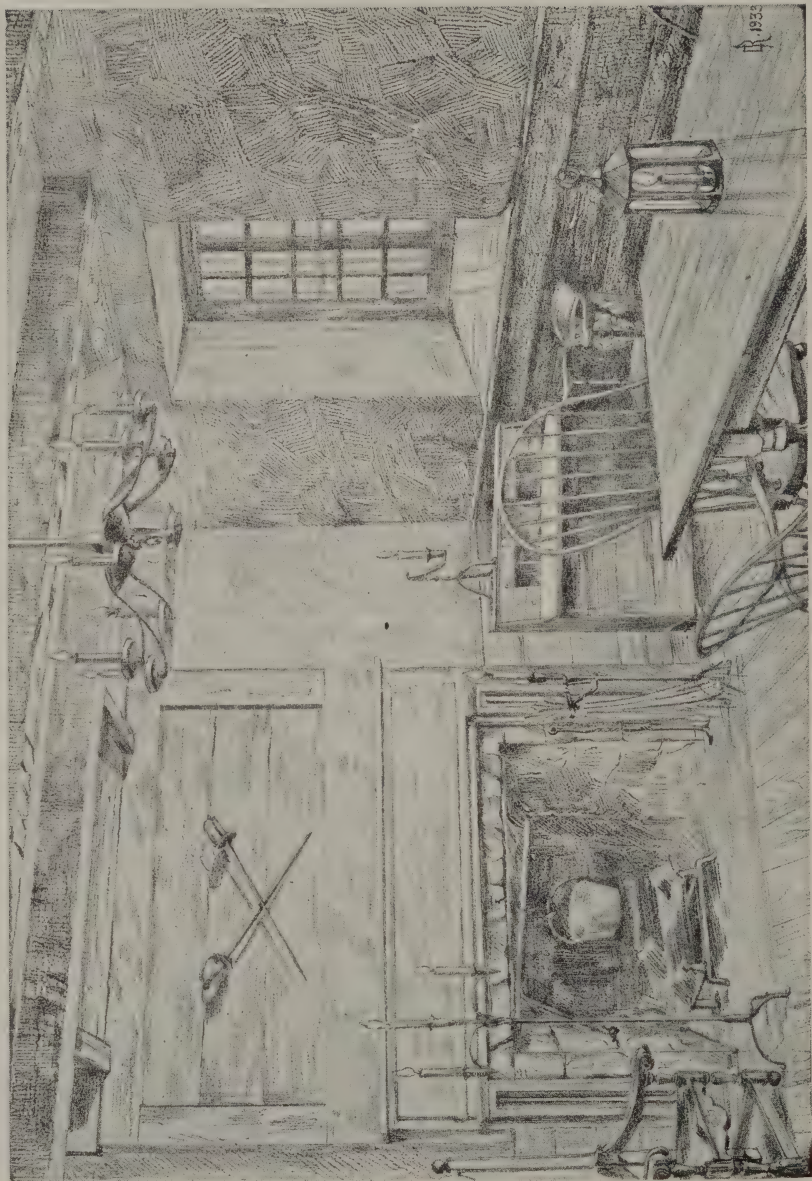
Winter of Starvation

To be ambushed by hostile Indians, robbed and perhaps murdered, was a common occurrence in the late 17th century among the traders and soldiers who took the risk of journeying westward to Niagara. To be lost in the wilderness and to face starvation was not unusual, but the saddest story in all the history of the Niagara Frontier is that of the Year of Starvation.

As the work of building Denonville's fort neared completion, the Governor boarded his boats with the balance of his men and sailed for home, promising the garrison of one hundred left in command to bring them proper provisions for the winter.

An extract from the memoirs of Chevalier de Tregay, surviving Commanding Officer, most vividly tells the story of that terrible winter.

Denonville's destruction of property among the Iroquois earlier in the summer had caused the Indians to be extremely hostile. Provisions ran low and the supply ship failed to appear. de Tregay tells of futile attempts of the men to take fish from the lake. They were all on the verge of starvation when a barque appeared on the horizon. The boat was becalmed for two days some leagues away from the mouth of the river, but finally was brought to port and unloaded. "It was not until her sails had fall'n below the horizon that we fairly had sight or smell of what she had aboard," de Tregay writes. In fact, the provisions proved to be ruined and the garrison of one



Sir William Johnson's Council Chamber

hundred faced the winter with no food fit for human consumption, with hostile Indians on one side and water on the other, their fort a virtual prison. Scurvy and starvation set in.

de Tregay writes: "The wood choppers, one day, facing a storm, fell in the drifts just outside the gate; none durst go out to them. The second day the wolves found them—and we saw it all." Late in February sixty of the one hundred were dead. A few with stouter stomachs than the rest did all the duties of the post. de Tregay tells of how one morning he found the brave de Troues mumbling the name of one he loved as he joined the major portion of his garrison.

The winter wore on. Even hope of hope was abandoned. de Tregay was on the verge of delirium. He prepared to die and was sinking back upon the boards of his rough bunk in a state of coma. Suddenly he was brought to consciousness of a new presence and laboriously raised his head, beheld a huge Indian chief in all the glory of war paint and feathers. Convinced that the tomahawk was the lesser of the two fates confronting him, de Tregay slumped back upon his bunk, resigned to the quicker death.

The Indian, a warrior of the Miamis from the far-off valley of the Ohio, held forth his hand filled with parched corn and in his native tongue, spoke: "Eat."

A rescue was organized and effected on Good Friday, 1688. Twelve of the original garrison of one hundred were left.

On that same Good Friday, Rev. Father Pierre Millet, a member of the rescuing party, directed the erection of an eighteen foot cross in the center of the square formed by the outlines of Fort Denonville. On the arms of the cross were inscribed in large letters the following abbreviations: "Regn. Vinc. Imp. Chrs." standing for "Regnat, Vincit, Imperat, Christus." Before the cross which he had erected in commemoration of the ill-fated members of Denonville's garrison, Father Millet said a Mass and solemnly blessed the monument.

On the 15th of September, 1688, on the orders of the Marquis de Denonville, Governor and Lieutenant General for the King, Captain Sieur des Bergeres, Commanding Officer, Fort Niagara, and his detachment of marines, abandoned Fort Denonville. Denonville's orders to abandon were the result of a treaty between England and France.

We shall quote the following entirely from the pages of Volume I, "An Old Frontier of France," Buffalo Historical Society publication, No. 20, by the late Frank H. Severance, outstanding Niagara Frontier historian.

"From the days of La Salle and Denonville, down to the re-establishment of the French on the Niagara, the story of Lake Ontario appeals by its very meagerness to the imagination. Never wholly deserted by traders, it was, as has been seen, more than once the theater of scenes of violence and outlawry. The French, realizing more and more its splendid possibilities, sent into it a good store of trading goods; and, at least until the temporary abandonment of Fort Frontenac, kept in commission one or two primitive brigantines, which skirted the forested shores, made port of call wherever barter could be had, and cruised without hindrance and with no mean seamanship these lonely wilderness waters. Wind and wave and season's changes, seemingly so fickle, were then as now; but the intrepid navigator of those distant years had little to rely on save his own resource and the Providence which attends the daring. There were no charts to show channel or reef, rock or shoal, save such as he might sketch from his own discoveries; no lights to warn or guide; no harbors even, save such as nature made; yet every glimpse we have of the life of old, shows the lake sailors of those days as a happy-go-lucky crew, who knew the ins and outs of Ontario's shores, rocky isles and tortuous channels, as no manner of men have known them since, and who bore into every bay and anchorage the white flag of the Bourbon Kings.

"Today, the leisured yachtsman making holiday, moors his shining craft in some pellucid cove. As evening falls, the lap of the wavelets at the vessel's side, the incense of his ruminative pipe, lull his soul into a receptive sense of sights and sounds unheeded in the bright and busy day. Dimly through the dusk, around the neighboring point he sees a strange-shaped vessel glide. He hears the creak of a gaff, the muffled clatter of lowering sails, calls and commands in a tongue half known, half strange; the splash of an anchor and the rhythm of a running chain. The August moon makes silhouette of a distant pipe, the drowsy breeze brings refrain of some foolish, haunting melody of the old régime, of the days when the hardy sons of France, sailing these wilderness waters as their own, still like the children they were, sang the songs of Anjou, of Brittany or Lorraine. Lulled to the borderland of sleep, our summer sailor vows to seek at daybreak the unknown craft—but with the first sunlight, his thought is for the morning plunge, the glorious swim; and like the vanishing wisps of mist, fades the memory of his brief and shadowy comradeship with the old-time voyageurs and sailors of the Ontario sea."

The Stone House



HUMBLE in office as compared with many of the makers of early Niagara Frontier history, but the outstanding figure of that dark period between the evacuation of Fort Denonville in 1688 and the building of Fort Niagara in 1726, was Louis Thomas de Joncaire, usually referred to as Chabert de Joncaire. Holding a minor commission in the French forces, he became associated with colonial struggles, probably by accompanying the Marines under Chevalier de Vaudriol on his trip to America in 1687.

Had it not been for Joncaire, no doubt the history of the Niagara region—yes, of half of the present United States—might have been vastly different. A volume devoted to his exploits, his unusually thrilling adventures, and his masterful diplomacy, would read most entertainingly.

At just what date his association with the Seneca Indians began is uncertain, though it dates back at least to 1701. Early in his colonial experience, he and several of his companions were captured by Senecas. Different writers tell the tale in varied detail. It seems apparent that a display of exceptional bravery in the face of threatened typical Indian death torture saved his life. With subsequent diplomacy, this characteristic served to insure a lifetime of friendship from the Indians. He was adopted into their tribes and raised to the high office of Sachem. This association meant more to France in her dealings with the Iroquois at Niagara than any other alliance in the history of French contest in America.

England and France at times during this period were at peace—at least technically—but at no time was there peace between the competing English and French traders on the Niagara and Lake Ontario. Both had long since visualized the importance of fortifying the river and thus controlling the fur trade. To the French, it was imperative to control Niagara for it was the only logical connecting link between their western cordon of forts and their eastern headquarters at Quebec and Montreal. The Iroquois, lying between two fires, leaned first one way and then another. It finally became possible for Joncaire, in 1720, through his friendship with the Senecas, to build on the present site of Lewiston, N. Y., a flimsy bark house which marked the beginning of a new era of French control of the Portage.

This frail dwelling was enlarged to the proportions of a 30-foot by 40-foot store house, surrounded by a substantial stockade of vertical logs with pointed ends. Here the portage fur trade was practically controlled until 1725, when the French obtained permission from the Iroquois to build on the Niagara, a "stone house."

It is interesting to note that the resultant "stone house," now called the French "Castle" at Fort Niagara, is not of the conventional type of fortification for the period in which it was constructed. Perhaps there is a distinct reason for this. For many years the French had cherished the idea of building a fortification upon the strategic river. In 1725 the faithful Joncaire and his fellow diplomat, Lieutenant de Longueuil, obtained from the Senecas permission for the French to build on the river. In presenting this project to the Indians, the emissaries dared not to call the building a fort, persisting it was to be "a stone house for the purpose of storage."

Historians tell us that de Longueuil presented the plans of the building to the Indian chiefs. It may not be altogether unlikely, however, that as the emissaries related their plans for a stone building on the Niagara, that the wise old Indian chiefs, many of whom had visited Montreal and Quebec, demanded to see such plans. They knew well the appearance of the typical French fort and they also knew the lines of the typical French-Canadian abode house. Perhaps Joncaire and de Longueuil, at all costs determined to carry out the essential French plan of fortifying the Niagara, drew plans for the proposed building in the presence of the Indians. And, perhaps, realizing the Chieftains' knowledge of French architecture, they durst draw no other plans than those of the typical abode house. In any event, the Old Castle was built substantially on the plan of the French Provincial Chateau or home.

The French Provincial Government appropriated 29,295 lres, or approximately \$5,592.00 and appointed Gaspard Chaussegeros de Lery to prosecute the work of building the "stone house." Along with the appropriation for the building of the new fort, was one covering the cost of two ships, to be built at Kingston for the purpose of carrying supplies and materials for building and to conduct the fur trade across the lake.

While de Longueuil had planned that the new fort at Niagara should be located in the vicinity of Joncaire's store house, the present site of Lewiston, de Lery soon determined that the greater vantage point, both from the angle of river and lake control, was on the ancient triangle, successively recognized as the most strategic by his predecessors La Salle and Denonville. He was upheld in this contention,



Artificer's Cabin

even though he actually started the work on this site before having obtained authority to do so.

While de Lery's stone house retained an appearance in keeping with its design, it was a veritable fort; its walls four feet thick; huge stone arches to absorb the lateral sway that might be created by firing cannon from the top deck; its inside well as a precaution against siege; in fact, the finest fortress that had been built to date in the west.

What toil and engineering ingenuity was required to build so serviceable a structure in the wilderness Frontier of that time. Trim stone for doors and windows was shipped from Frontenac (now Kingston, Ont.) quarries; timber was cut and hauled from the surrounding countryside. The balance of the stone used was taken from the Niagara Escarpment, while the iron and other materials were shipped from Quebec and Montreal through Frontenac.

Three Flags



BETWEEN 1727 and 1758 there was much activity at Fort Niagara. The ever existing struggle between the French and English to control the frontier fur trade continued in spite of formal declaration of peace between the mother countries. For years the French had anticipated an English attack upon the fort. In preparation for this they sent a military engineer by the name of Captain François Pouchot, of the Regiment of Bearn, who between 1750 and 1759 converted Fort Niagara from the old stone house, with a few temporary buildings, into an elaborate stronghold with its system of earthworks, moats, powder magazine and its complement of artillery batteries.

Inevitable assault by the English came in July, 1759. War had been declared between France and England in 1756.

For one hundred years the French and the English had been in a more or less constant state of war in America. The French holdings to the southwest, down the Allegheny, on the Monongahela and the Ohio into the Mississippi, and out the Great Lakes, under the plans of La Salle and his successors, covered the greater part of the middle west. Singularly, however, the one and only feasible connecting link between their western and southern territory and French headquarters in Canada, was the straits of Niagara (as the French called the Niagara River). No full rigged ship or tiny batteau could pass westward unless the guns of old Fort Niagara gave consent. Even as it was the strongest link in the French chain, so it was the weakest, for in the hands of the enemy it became at once an unsurmountable blockade in communication between the nether ends of the French Empire in America.

English Take Niagara

These facts were voiced before the British Parliament by Sir William Pitt when he said that, second to the citadel in Quebec, Fort Niagara was the most important post in America "and must be taken at all costs."

As a result, orders were issued through General Amherst for General John Prideaux, with 2,200 regular British troops and militia, to proceed from Fort Stanwix (now Rome, N. Y.) by way of Fort Oswego (now Oswego, N. Y.) and Lake Ontario, to the capture of Fort Niagara. Between Stanwix and Oswego, Prideaux was joined by Sir William Johnson, British Commissioner of Indian Affairs, commanding 943 Iroquois warriors.

Early in July the large force landed at what it now called Four Mile Creek, approximately four miles east of the Fort and affording a small harbor. Entrenchments were made and preparations begun to lay siege to the French.

The Fort was still in command of Captain Pouchot, a gallant Frenchman, and garrisoned by 496 military men and 39 employees, five of whom were women and children.

Captain Pouchot refused to comply with General Prideaux's offer of "reasonable terms of surrender." There followed 18 days of siege, the English drawing ever closer and entrenching as they advanced.

Pouchot had sent runners to Little Fort Niagara, a small stockade at the upper end of the portage, and to other French posts to the south and west, calling for aid. He directed the reinforcements to proceed down the west side of the river but they ignored this order and marched boldly from the Falls down the east side. The reinforcements consisted of 1,400 French soldiers and Indians.

Sir William Johnson's Iroquois scouts anticipated this move and the English engaged the marching columns of French and Indian allies just within the present village limits of Youngstown. The engagement was short and severe. The French were scattered in every direction and many made prisoners, while many more met sterner fate.

The battle was called La Belle Famille, and it marked the beginning of the end of French rule in America. Pouchot's reinforcements ineffective, he was forced to surrender. With customary honors the garrison of 607 soldiers, eleven officers and their ladies marched out of Fort Niagara as prisoners of war. The English marched in—and a new era in America was begun.

A New Era

With the fall of Fort Niagara, the French had lost the stronghold key to their vast western territory. While trade for some time had been slowly slipping away from the French because the Indians could strike better bargains with the English, the loss of Fort Niagara meant that western commerce would be almost entirely controlled by

its new occupants, the English, under Sir William Johnson.

General Prideaux had fallen the victim of a premature explosion of one of his own cannon during the siege of Fort Niagara and Sir William Johnson had succeeded in command before the time of the French capitulation.

Just what direct effect this exchange of the fortification may have had in determining the destinies of western United States and Canada, is a matter of opinion among historians, though most students of the subject declare it to have been of great significance. Recently a famous barrister stated: "the Battle of La Belle Famille determined whether or not the Niagara Frontier and that vast territory once known as Louisiana should continue under the absolute monarchism of France or the more democratic government of England, under which colonization was much more practical."

Be this as it may, there is little doubt that Sir William Johnson, as first English Commander, made much constructive history for the Niagara Frontier and the countryside for hundreds of miles in every direction. For a number of years he had been Commissioner of Indian Affairs for his home government and his name was a password in Iroquois circles.

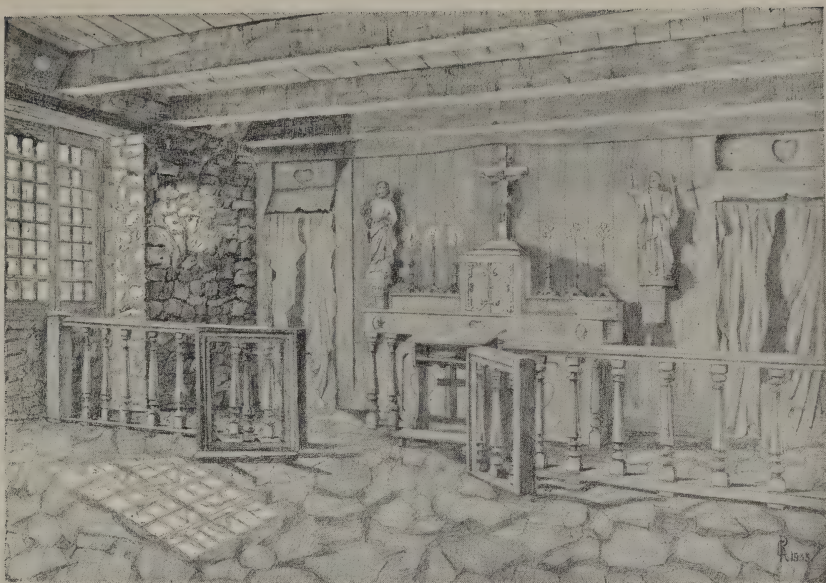
Under Sir William Johnson, Fort Niagara became the center of commercial, social and political endeavor more than ever before. Sir William was at once the soldier, the diplomat, the jurist and the trader. While he spent a great part of his time in this period following 1759 at Johnstown, N. Y., his real headquarters were at Niagara. It was from Fort Niagara that he reached out with his predominating personality and held the Indian tribes under his influence. It was from Niagara that he ruled half of America.

Devil's Hole Massacre

It was not without wholesale sacrifice that Sir William Johnson was to make inroads in the fur trade and improve conditions on the Niagara Frontier in the period following the capture of Fort Niagara.

In the fall of 1763, Pontiac—an Indian Chief—set up a conspiracy to recapture Fort Niagara for his French allies. This plan never materialized, but the schemer did manage to do considerable damage to the English on September 14 of that year.

Little Fort Niagara, the French post at the upper end of the portage, had been destroyed upon French evacuation and had been rebuilt by the English as Fort Schlosser. Under the French, the Seneca Indians had been hired to carry the portage



Jesuit Chapel, the "Castle"

trade upon their backs. Sir William Johnson, as a first step in improving conditions on the portage, had built a wagon road so that merchandise might be hauled by teams of horses and oxen.

As the first wagon train was halfway on its trip from Fort Schlosser to the lower landing, in the vicinity of what is known as the Devil's Hole (the edge of the Niagara Gorge at the present north line of the City of Niagara Falls) 500 Seneca Indians, under the influence of Pontiac, ambushed the drivers and their escort.

With the first volley, many members of the wagon train party fell. Most of those remaining were finished with tomahawk and scalping knife. Many plunged to death over the side of the gorge. A few escaped. John Stedman, who had charge of the portage and who was mounted upon a fast horse, and a drummer boy by the name of Matthews, have gone down in history as two survivors. The drummer boy fell over the cliff and lodged in a tree-top, later making his way to Fort Niagara. He lived in Queenston, Ont., until he reached the ripe old age of 94 years.

A party at the lower landing (now Lewiston) heard the firing up the river and set out to investigate. They too, were ambushed and most of them killed.

This was a daring step on the part of the Indians and it left them with grave doubts as to what Johnson might have to say about it. Fearing revenge, the Senecas in April, 1764, sent 400 men to Sir William asking for peace. The wise diplomat realized the fallacy of asking life for life of these men who had died at the Devil's Hole and so he determined that the Senecas should pay in land for their indiscretion.

Johnson Treaties

Pontiac's conspiracy had alarmed the English—the Indian leader having been so successful in the Devil's Hole Massacre—and Sir William Johnson set about to build up safeguards against the recurrence of such an act.

In payment of the Devil's Hole outrage, the Senecas deeded a strip of land, two miles from either shore of the Niagara River and extending from Lake Ontario to Lake Erie, to the English government. The islands of the river they deeded to Sir William, but he immediately turned them over to the State.

It was to ratify this treaty, which had other provisions, and to insure peace, that Sir William sent messages to all Indian tribes for hundreds of miles, north, east, south and west, who wished to make peace with the English to come to Fort Niagara. The message was backed up by means of a force of arms under General Bradstreet, numbering 1,200 troops.

In July, 1764, they came: Red men, representing tribes from Nova Scotia to the Mississippi, and from the north and from the south, came 2,060 strong to make peace with England, with Sir William Johnson.

Never in the annals of the Red men, had such a representative group of Indians gathered. Their wigwam camps stretched for miles around.

The late Hon. Peter A. Porter writes of this meeting: "Many reasons had induced this great assemblage of Indians. Some came to make peace because the aid expected from the French had not been forthcoming; some because they were tired of war; some because they needed clothing, ammunition, etc., and could get them no other way; some by an early admission to avert retribution for past offenses; some came as spies, and some, no doubt, because they knew at such a time 'fire water' would be easily obtainable."

At first the Senecas did not come. There was reason to believe that they had not intended to keep their treaty and therefore stayed away. Word was sent that if they did not appear at once at the Fort, the army stationed there would march upon their

villages and destroy them. At once a large body of Senecas appeared upon the scene.

Sir William went about the work of making treaty, not with the whole group at once, but tribe at a time, cutting his cloth to fit the individual, as he alone understood each case.

When the great council was over, Sir William had effected the most remarkable treaty in history. It took all the diplomacy and the shrewdness at Sir William's command to preserve order among the Indians. On one or two occasions shots were fired at members of the garrison, but in the famous Old Council Chamber, treaty after treaty was ratified.

According to Mr. Porter's works, the cost of this Indian congress was 25,000 pounds New York currency, or about \$10,000 for provisions, and 38,000 pounds sterling, or \$190,000 for presents to the Indians.

Niagara During Revolution

Histories of the same incident are sometimes widely different in their treatment, according to the predisposition of the author. We will recognize that this is particularly so in the many versions of Fort Niagara history during the American Revolution. The old post was at that time, of course, in the hands of the English, and we find the names of Col. John Butler, Molly Brant, Col. Guy Johnson and Chief Brant or Thyenega—as his Indian name is given—closely associated with this period. By patriotic writers of the cause of the United Colonies these characters are sometimes referred to in most uncomplimentary terms; descendants of the English patriots during this troublesome time are prone to describe the same leaders as kindly and humanitarian under trying circumstances.

Records show definitely that time after time the various commanders of the Fort protested to their home government against the use of uncontrollable Indian warriors against the Colonists—but without effect. Other records indicate that English officers and their families did much to alleviate suffering among unfortunate prisoners. In any event, the use of Indian forces by Fort Niagara commanders was at the orders of those "higher up."

It was at Fort Niagara that those terrible English-Indian expeditions to Cherry Valley and Wyoming Valley were planned. It was from Fort Niagara that many more such war parties set out to pillage and burn, to kill and to capture. It was back to Fort Niagara that they returned with prisoners, men, women and children; with scalps to account for those who had fallen during a surprise attack or along

the rough trail to the Fort. The Indians were paid for these scalps and in many cases were awarded their captives as slaves.

So terrible did this menace become that General Washington, realizing the demoralizing effect of the massacres upon the frontier settlers, sent one of his most able officers, General John Sullivan, to curb the Indian trouble. General Sullivan marched up through New York State, engaging the Indians here and there along the way and destroying every village in his path. He finally reached the Genesee River, 84 miles from Fort Niagara. In his official report of this expedition, General Sullivan stated that lack of 15 days' additional rations kept him from coming on and storming Fort Niagara, which he was confident he could have captured. His work was effective, however, for it stopped in a large measure the activities of the Indians.

The Fort was a retreat for English loyalists and roving Indians throughout the war and for many years thereafter.

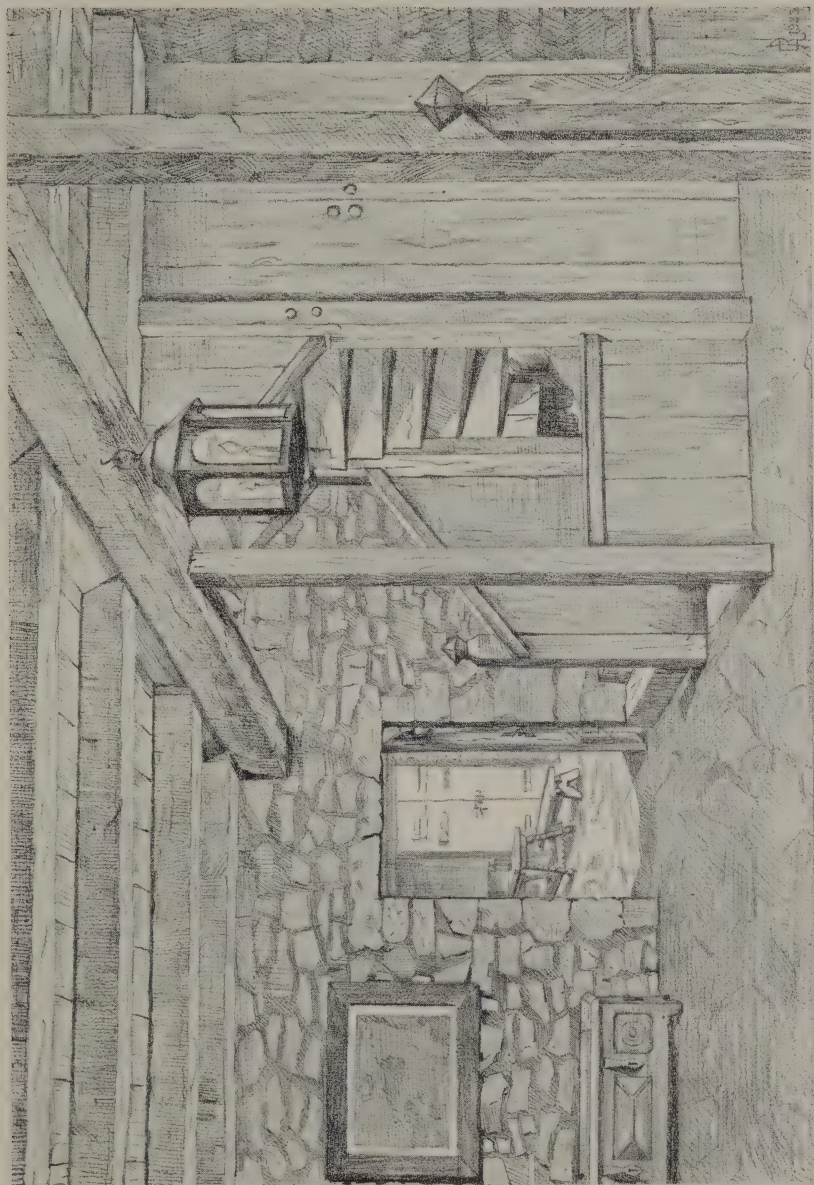
Holdover Period

Fort Niagara technically became the property of the United Colonies by the Treaty of Paris following the American Revolution in 1783, but the English military continued to hold the fortification and so to control the commerce of the river for thirteen years, until 1796, when the Fort was officially turned over to a small detachment of artillerymen of the United States Army. These thirteen years are known to historians as the "holdover" which term is self-explanatory.

Much has been written of this period between 1783 and 1796 in the history of many other fortifications, as well as Old Fort Niagara, along the present American-Canadian border. There was the lingering hope in British circles that the border between the British colonies and the United Colonies would be much to the south and to the east of that which finally obtained.

England had another problem—of safely evacuating from the colonies her colonial citizens who had remained loyal throughout the American Revolution. It is variously estimated that between 5,000 and 8,000 loyal British subjects passed from the various eastern and southern colonies through Fort Niagara to safety on Canadian soil.

Until after the American Revolution there was comparatively little settlement on the Niagara Frontier. Niagara rather had been the main portage place—truly the



Officers' Deck, the "Castle"

key to all the west, and still it was not a settlement. Under the English régime, the Empire Loyalists rapidly began to settle on what is now the Canadian side of the Frontier and the Village of Newark, now Niagara-on-the-Lake, and the Village of Queenston came into being. Fort Niagara as a center for succor, for police protection and all law and order, served during this period as a supply base from which to settle the fertile territory along the river and stretching eastward and westward above and below the escarpment. Newark assumed the proportions of the most important village in Upper Canada and there on the 17th of September, 1792, John Graves Simcoe, first Governor of Upper Canada, established the first parliament.

Pioneer Life

We shall take the liberty of quoting from a very rare pamphlet written by Chipman P. Turner, entitled, "The Pioneer Period of Western New York," and published by Bigelow Brothers, Buffalo printers, in 1888. Mr. Turner's word picture of the pioneer is, in part, as follows:

"It is winter that introduces a real, not an ideal or fictitious view. The pioneer, the fall preceding, obtained his 'article,' or had his land 'booked' to him, to build a rude loghouse; cold winter comes upon him before its completion and freezes the ground, so that he cannot mix the straw and mortar for his stick chimney, and that is dispensed with. He nevertheless has taken possession of his new home. The oxen that are browsing with the cow and three sheep; the two pigs and three fowls that his young wife is feeding from her folded apron; these, with a bed, two chairs, a pot and kettle, and a few indispensable articles for housekeeping, few and scanty altogether, as may be supposed, for all were brought in upon that ox-sled through an underbrushed road; these constitute the bulk of his worldly wealth. The opening in the woods is that which has been made to get logs for his house and browse his cattle for the few days in which he has been the occupant of his new home. He has a rousing fire; logs are piled up against his rude chimney back; his firewood convenient and plenty . . .

"The task before him is a formidable one, but he has a strong arm and a stout heart—he will yet sit down there with his companion of long years of toil and endurance; age will have come upon them, but success and competence will have crowned their efforts. They are destined to be the founders of a settlement and of a family—helpers in a work of progress and improvement such as has few parallels in an age and country distinguished for enterprise and perseverance."

War of 1812

A scene of peace and plenty around Fort Niagara was disturbed by that grim agent of man—war—in 1812, sometimes called the second war for independence. For years the American soldiers at Fort Niagara and the English at Fort George had built up a personal friendship by common meeting in the Village of Newark and many are the tales of happy gatherings among the people and the military of the surrounding countryside.

A pretty story is told in a brief history of Fort Niagara, written by the late Miss Janet Carnochan of Niagara-on-the-Lake. It relates that General Brock (English officer killed at the Battle of Queenston Heights) on the Sunday preceding the hostilities, was bidding goodbye to some American officers at Fort Niagara, who had come to service at St. Mark's Church in Newark. The General kissed two little girls of Dr. West, Niagara's Post Surgeon, saying, "Good-bye, my little rosy cheeked girls. The next time we meet it may be as enemies." So are the fortunes of war.

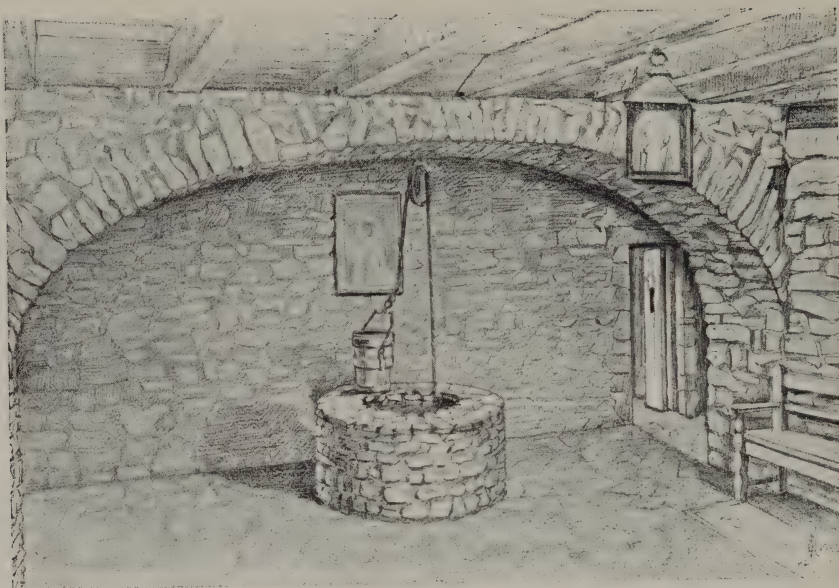
General Van Rensselaer, Fort Niagara Commander, planned the occupation of Queenston Heights as the first step in the war along the border. The balance of troops from Fort Niagara were sent to Lewiston to participate in this engagement. During their absence the English at Fort George, near Newark, bombarded Fort Niagara and nearly took it.

In rallying his men to recapture Queenston Heights General Brock was killed. On the day of his funeral, General Van Rensselaer issued orders that during the services minute guns should be fired from Fort Niagara "as a mark of respect due to a brave enemy."

There followed bombardment back and forth between Fort Niagara and Fort George with resulting damage to both forts, but no development of great moment.

In the spring of 1813, the American forces moved against Fort George and took it, holding it until December of that year. Word came that the British regulars, with Indian reinforcements, were advancing on Fort George. Under War Department orders, General McClure, commanding the American forces, burned the Village of Newark, spiked the guns of Fort George and withdrew to Fort Niagara.

Revenge for the burning of Newark was the first consideration of the English as they returned to the abandoned but serviceable Fort George. The British had no trouble in capturing Fort Niagara. There followed the wholesale burning of the Niagara Frontier, from Lewiston to Buffalo. The British had their revenge—a



"Castle" Vestibule with Haunted Well

countryside in ashes, homes gone, families scattered. The British held Fort Niagara until the end of the war.

In 1815 the Treaty of Ghent was signed and the Fort reverted to the United States.

Rush-Bagot Treaty

Soon thereafter, in 1817, was negotiated one of the greatest international agreements known to mankind. Though it consisted of but a few short paragraphs which contained no high-sounding diplomatic phraseology, and though the subject dealt with such simple things as small gunboats, the Rush-Bagot Treaty, has cast a ray of light over the world and has demonstrated conclusively that more than 3,500 miles of international boundary can remain at peace without the mounting of a gun. Following is the Treaty:

"Whereas an arrangement was entered into in the city of Washington, in the month of April, in the year of our Lord, one thousand eight hundred and seventeen, between Richard Rush, Esq., at that time acting as Secretary for the Department of State of the United States, and the right honorable Charles Bagot, His Britannic Majesty's envoy extraordinary and minister plenipotentiary, for and in behalf of His Britannic Majesty; which arrangement is in words following to wit:

"The naval force to be maintained upon the American Lakes, by His Majesty and the Government of the United States, shall henceforth be confined to the following vessels on each side, that is:—

"On Lake Ontario, to one vessel, not exceeding one hundred tons burden, and armed with one eighteen pound cannon.

"On the Upper Lakes, to two vessels, not exceeding like burden each armed with like force.

"On the waters of Lake Champlain, to one vessel, not exceeding like burden and armed with like force.

"All other armed vessels on these lakes shall forthwith be dismantled and no other vessels of war shall be built or armed.

"If either party should be hereafter desirous of annulling this stipulation, and should give notice to that effect to the other party, it shall cease to be binding after the expiration of six months from date of such notice.

"The naval force so to be limited shall be restricted to such services as will in no respect interfere with the proper duties of the armed vessels of the other party.

"And whereas the Senate of the United States has approved of the said arrangement and recommended that it should be carried into effect; the same having also received the sanction of His Royal Highness the Prince Regent, acting in the name and on behalf of his Britannic Majesty;

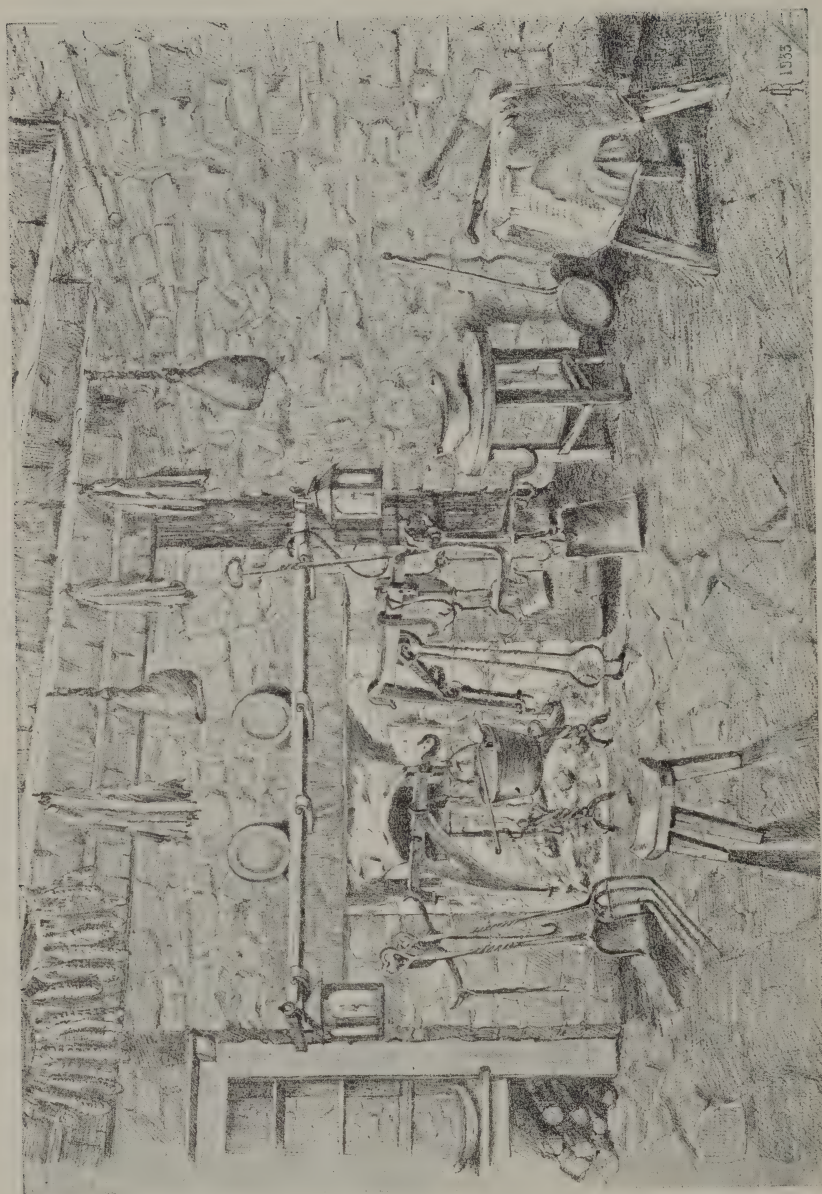
"Now, therefore, I, James Monroe, President of the United States, do, by this my Proclamation, make known and declare that the arrangements aforesaid, and every stipulation thereof, have been duly entered into, concluded and confirmed, and are of full force and effect.

"Given under my hand, at the City of Washington, this twenty-eighth of April, in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and eighteen and of the independence of the United States the forty-second.

"BY THE PRESIDENT

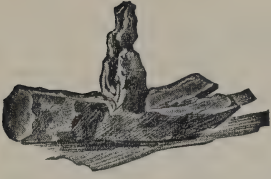
JAMES MONROE

JOHN QUINCY ADAMS, *Secretary of State.*"



"Boulangerie," French Military Kitchen

"The Harvest of Their Vision"



THOUGH but seldom in the past 200 years has the sun been set to rest at Fort Niagara without the bugle call, those clarion notes since 1815 have been but echoes of the glorious past. It is just an ancient landmark with a wealth of significant history and the one remaining symbol of Niagara's early pioneer days.

Gradually the Old Fort was abandoned as military quarters, the garrison moving into the new buildings erected from time to time to the south, and now comprising a modern Fort Niagara, which is used for the training of troops.

In times of emergency, however, the old buildings of ancient Fort Niagara have been pressed into service for the housing of troops and supplies. The Old Castle has been used for such purposes as recently as during the World War.

We have discussed the ancient triangle, where the Old Fort stands, from the time before white man had placed foot in the virgin forests on the banks of the Niagara until the present day. It has been the scene of many contests; of religious and social reformation, of dark horrors of Indian warfare and political imprisonment, and the center of a commerce without parallel in its day. It has been the scene of peace.

We have followed the period of French, English and American occupation. We have tried to visualize the significance of the ascendancy of the English more than 150 years ago, to point out the commercial and political importance of the Old Fort. We have called attention to the part the Old Fort has played in the initial steps toward formulating a great commerce.

All of this historical fact from which we form our individual opinions and prejudices, is only the reflection of the lives and characters of those whose acts brought about the series of circumstances with which we have had to deal. Men of France, men of England and men of America, each in turn, have served well under their respective flags at Old Fort Niagara. Each in his turn has contributed in one way or another to the happy state of affairs which we know today.

Perhaps the writer can best express his thoughts in this connection by the relation of a few lines of verse which came to him as he stopped beneath the old Lombardy poplar trees which have stood in the Old Fort for two hundred years:

To stand beneath these silent Lombardies,
The sentries of the passing centuries;
To gaze far out, across the azure deep
In quiet communion with them as they keep
Their endless vigil o'er this sacred soil;
To live with them again the tragedies,
The hopes, the fears, the gallant victories
That marked the tireless pace of those who sleep,
Who lived and fought and died—that we might reap
The harvest of their vision and their toil.

Old Fort Niagara has been restored and is prepared as a lasting symbol to remind us of that price which was paid in struggle and strife, in life and in death, to create our America. With infinite care those responsible for the work have searched the archives of three nations that the restoration might properly and adequately represent fact. The Old Fort Niagara Association, representative of all the patriotic and civic societies on the Frontier and thousands of private citizens who made the restoration possible, is dedicated to the preservation of the Old Fort as a symbolic shrine, and historical institute.

Today over the ancient parade ground floats the flags of three great nations, the blue field and three golden Fleurs-de-lis that René Robert Cavelier de La Salle carried to the old triangle; the blue field with the red and white crosses of St. George and St. Andrew, carried here by Prideaux and Johnson, and the stars and stripes with fifteen bars and fifteen stars, the American flag of 1796, first American standard to fly over Fort Niagara.

Theirs is the glory—the heritage ours.

A GUIDE TO RESTORED OLD FORT NIAGARA

RESTORED Old Fort Niagara essentially is a composite picture of this famous old site during parts of the 17th, 18th and 19th centuries, as it was occupied successively by French, British and American forces. Thus perhaps it provides an unparalleled cross-section of American Colonial history. To have restored only to the period of any one national occupation would have necessitated razing of buildings and fortifications and the destruction of many interesting features. Also, such a course would have defeated, to a great extent, the fundamental purpose of creating an International Patriotic Shrine.

The work of restoration was begun in 1927, although some preliminary work was started in 1923. Twenty patriotic, civic and fraternal societies early in 1927 organized Old Fort Niagara Association, Inc., a non-profit, membership corporation, expressly for the purpose of centralizing interest and crystallizing effort in the restoration and rehabilitation of Old Fort Niagara, and for the purpose of maintaining it as an International Patriotic Shrine and Educational Institute.

Through a combination of Federal, State and County aid, matched by private contributions and revenues from operations, the restoration has been financed. The project has been placed upon a sound operating basis through its own revenues. Countless contributions of money, expert service and goodwill from almost every conceivable source have made the success of the work possible. Many organizations and individuals have made donations to restore or rehabilitate buildings, fortifications and other parts of the undertaking. These contributions have been gratefully acknowledged in a formal way, but for them, posterity shall be exceedingly thankful for generations to come.

It is the purpose of this section of this booklet to serve as a guide to visitors to Old Fort Niagara in such a manner that, with the use of the map which is folded in the back cover of the book, one may more intelligently study and acquire a more comprehensive knowledge of the entire work than is possible through the regular guide service. It would be impracticable to attempt here to anticipate every question which might be asked concerning the Old Fort; such a work would require volumes. Rather, shall we endeavor to describe concisely, step by step, the buildings, fortifications and other points of interest in the order that they might be inspected by the average visitor passing over the drawbridge into historic Old Fort Niagara.

1 • ENTRANCE

Porte des Cinq Nations (Gate of the Five Nations)

As you walk up the ramp and across the restored French drawbridge to enter Old Fort Niagara, you arrive at *Porte des Cinq Nations* (Gate of the Five Nations) built by Capitaine François Pouchot in 1756-57 as a part of his project to expand and elaborate the entire fortification. Pouchot called the entrance "Gate



of the Five Nations" in honor of the five nations of the famous Iroquois Federation of Indians, probably as a gesture to incur their good will. This gate, with its moat, ramp, drawbridge and headhouse, served as the main entrance throughout French, British and early American occupation. As restored, the entire gateway is in working order, even to the counter balances and windlasses for lifting the bridge.



2 • SOUTH BLOCKHOUSE

After passing through the headhouse you enter another building, called the South Blockhouse, a redoubt built by the British in 1770, to serve, along with an identical building in the northeast corner of the Fort, as a flanking protection for the land side of the triangular fortification. The Blockhouse was designed to be manned by twenty soldiers with complete accommo-

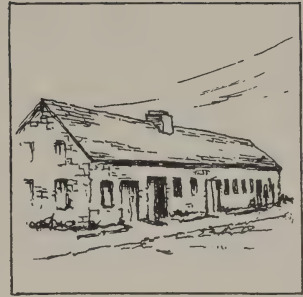


dations for that number. It is equipped with musket embrasures on two floors and two cannon are mounted on the top deck. A peculiarity of these blockhouses is the construction which permits complete dismantling of the roof on short notice in case of attack, thus obviating the danger of flying splinters from direct hits of artillery fire.

3 • HISTORICAL INSTITUTE

Magasin-Baraque (Storehouse-Barracks)

Immediately upon the left, after leaving the South Blockhouse, you will note a long, low building, erected by Pouchot in 1757 as a Magasin or Storehouse. Later this building was used by the French as a barracks and as a stable. The British forces also used it successively as a stable and barracks. As restored this French Magasin has become a utility building for the administration of the Old Fort, with the exception of the center section, which has been dedicated as an Historical Institute. In this center section you will find huge wall and relief maps depicting the history of the territory influenced by Fort Niagara throughout the Colonial period. Also you will find many portraits in oil of historic characters of early Niagara and the conquest of mid-America.

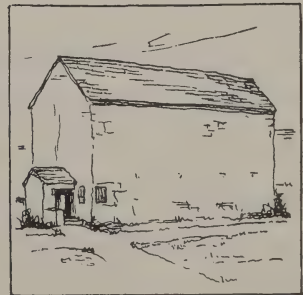


4 • MAGASIN AU POUDRE

(Powder Magazine)

L'Institut d'Honneur (Institute of Honor)

The next building, immediately adjoining the Historical Institute, is Pouchot's Powder Magazine, built by him in 1757 (you may note his date stone over the inside entrance) as a storehouse for ammunition. It is very heavily constructed of solid masonry with a thick stone arch apparent from the inside. Until the time of restoration, this arch, to the height of the eaves



of the building, was covered with a layer of earth, designed to retard cannon balls which might penetrate the shingled roof. This building is now known as l'Institut d'Honneur, or Hall of Fame, and was so dedicated in October 1935. The interior is devoted to an exhibit of miscellaneous articles recovered from the grounds and buildings during the restoration period. Under the arch of the building is a series of sixteen murals, beginning at the right upon entering, and progressing counter-clockwise, they portray the chronological cross-section of the history of Niagara from pre-historic days to the conclusion of conflict along the Canadian-American boundary.



5 • MAGASIN — LA FORGE -- ATELIER

(Storehouse—Blacksmith Shop—Work Shop)



Close to the Powder Magazine, you will find a log cabin structure typical of the French period of Pouchot and his predecessors. This building is on the same foundations and site as one built by Pouchot in 1757 and is used for much the same purpose today as by the French nearly 200 years ago. The east end is the cabinet shop, the center the blacksmith forge and in the west end is the trading post. The workshops are in daily use in connection with the restoration and maintenance of the Old Fort and therefore closed to the public, but the trading post at the west end, with its rustic fireplace, beamed ceiling and rough log interior, is extremely interesting. A complete stock of booklets, postcards and souvenirs of Old Fort Niagara, as well as refreshments, photographic films and smokers' supplies are available at moderate prices.

6 • POSTERN GATE

Near the entrance to the Trading Post is the Postern Gate, which in one form or another has existed since the first extensive fortifications by Pouchot (1756-57). The present gate was built in 1839 by U. S. Army engineers as a part of the cut-stone wall which extends from the earthworks to the seawall. The stone wall is approximately on the same lines as several former stockades of vertical logs. The gateway in the early days, according to French and British maps, was protected by an extension, flanking the passageway and terminating in another gate, comparable in principle to the double gates of the Headhouse and the Blockhouse through which you entered the Fort. It was through this gate that supplies, equipment and other materials were carried into the Fort from the Landing Place.

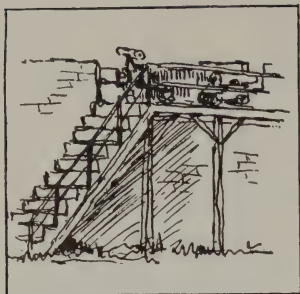


7 • HOT SHOT OVEN

This small, stone furnace was used to heat cannon balls red-hot before they were fired, the object being to ignite the target, such as a ship in the river, a fortification or other inflammable equipment of an enemy. Heated shot also had other advantages, i. e., a tendency to explode when striking the water, the while they commanded certain respect from an enemy contemplating reusing them for further artillery fire. The oven was built in 1839, at the same time as the nearby wall, although the heating of shot dates back to the 16th or 17th centuries, and was common practice during the Civil War in the United States. It is apparent that the solid shot were placed in the oven at the high end, rolled by gravity towards the fire pot at the far end, and removed from the oven, by means of a special tongs, at the lower opening.



8 • HOT SHOT BATTERY



A few feet beyond the Hot Shot Oven are the stairs leading to the Hot Shot Battery, commanding the mouth of the river and extending from the apex of the angle of the wall to control the flanks of the south and west exposures of the Fort. This battery also was a part of the 1839 construction and its gun mount-

ings are typical of the period. In the center of the battery is a gun especially designed to throw hot shot at shipping and across the river. This gun had a range sufficient to carry well to the far side of the small village on the Canadian shore. It is mounted on a small-scale barbette carriage. The other two guns of the battery are 24-pounder, flanking casemate howitzers, so mounted as to provide a raking fire along the expanse of wall in either direction. These howitzers were for use only in case of an attempt to scale the walls.



THE KEY TO MID-AMERICA

From the vantage point of the Hot Shot Battery you enjoy an excellent view of the Niagara River as it empties into the blue waters of Lake Ontario; of the old Landing Place by means of which water traffic once supplied Fort Niagara; and of the Canadian shore with its complement of Colonial fortifications. Standing by the shoulder-high curtains of this battery, it is not difficult for you to realize how Fort Niagara controlled the narrow waterway before you and therefore the only logical and economical route to the west. This was the realization of La Salle, de Denonville, de Lery, Johnson and many others who led armies into mortal conflict in order to command this vital position. Immediately below you is the site of the ancient wharfs

where docked the rugged men-of-war and square-rigged merchant ships. The site at present is occupied by the Niagara Station of the United States Coast Guard service. If you care to visit the dock after your tour of the Old Fort, you will find an old French anchor, recovered from the river in 1937 and suitably mounted and marked as a memorial to the Landing Place and to the men and ships that plied their trade there in the centuries just past.

Across the river you may catch a glimpse of the little village, first called Newark but now known as Niagara-on-the-Lake. It was there in 1792 that John Graves Simcoe formed the first parliament of Upper Canada and the village became the Capital. It is a unique settlement to this day, fairly breathing the atmosphere of the English seaside village. It is replete with historic lore, from ancient St. Mark's Church, with its fascinating grave yard, to its 1812 fortification known as Fort George and now restored by the Province of Ontario. In the hinter-lands are many other interesting places, such as the grave yard of Butler's famous Rangers and the historic Servos homestead. At the far point of the Canadian shore is old Fort Missasauga, built immediately following the war of 1812.

From Old Fort Niagara's Hot Shot Battery may be visualized much of the important history of the Niagara Frontier and the conquest of mid-America. Fort Niagara of early days truly was the "Key to the West."



9 • LA SALLE MEMORIAL

Passing along the stone wall from the Hot Shot Battery, you arrive at a memorial to René Robert Cavelier, Sieur de La Salle, beloved French explorer and founder of Fort Niagara. This simple memorial, a large native boulder, inset with a suitably inscribed bronze tablet and flanked by two French field guns, was placed in 1934 and dedicated by nearly 300



citizens of France, headed by M. Flandin, then French Minister of Public Works and later Premier. It is located as nearly as possible to the site of Fort Conti, which La Salle built upon this point of land in the winter of 1679.

It will be noted that the Fort wall at this point is low, allowing full vision to the River and Lake. This section of the wall was torn down in the late 19th century and, in restoring the Fort, it was thought advisable to replace only a portion, rather than to block off the remarkable view afforded by the low wall.



10 • BOULANGERIE BAKERY



Bearing to the right, not far beyond the La Salle memorial, you are at the entrance to the French bakery. This small building, housing two large ovens, originally was built by Pouchot in 1756 or 57 and was one of several buildings in the immediate area. Others, however, were of wooden construction and long since have disappeared. The bakery later was extensively repaired by the British and on the north side bears the British date stone. Comparatively slight alterations were necessary to return it to its earliest condition. It is interesting to note that baking was done in these units by building a fire entirely within the ovens; when they were heated sufficiently, the embers were withdrawn and the dough placed to bake in the "stored" heat.

11 • The "CASTLE"

The oldest, largest and most important building in Old Fort Niagara is known affectionately as the "Castle." Where this name originated, no one seems to know. Perhaps it is purely a localism. In any event, the name has become generally accepted in the nomenclature of Old Fort Niagara and its use so deeply rooted as to challenge any attempt at substitution. To Gaspard



Chaussagras de Lery, Engineer to Louis XV, who built the "Castle" in 1725 and 26, it probably was known as simply la Forteresse à Niagara, for, indeed, it was an entire fortification within itself. Or, it may have been called la Chateau. Singularly, its architecture conforms unmistakably with that of the typical French provincial home of a man of means. There is a well substantiated story that de Lery built the "Castle" along these lines to satisfy the Indians' objections to the building of a fort—Indians who, through their visits to Montreal and Quebec, well knew the difference between the conventional French fort and the traditional colonial home. The British and early American occupants of Niagara called the "Castle" the "Mess House" as it often is designated in reports and relations of those periods.

Today, the "Castle" is exactly as it was when completed by de Lery, with the exception of one room. In 1927, Old Fort Niagara Association, through the late Frank A. Severance, Director of the Buffalo Historical Society, and the late Myron T. Herrick, then Ambassador to France, obtained photostatic copies of de Lery's report plans of the building. The restoration, therefore is known to be authentic. Through years of French, British and American occupation, the interior repeatedly was remodeled as well as repaired, although the sturdy construction fortunately did not permit drastic changes. The exterior, with the exception of porch additions and changes in dormer openings, was not materially altered since the erection of the building.

Following is a brief, room by room description of the "Castle":

Magasin pour la Traite—Trade Room

Entering the "Castle" at the right-hand door, as you face the building, is the French Trade Room and *Chambre du Commis*, or office of the Agent. It was here that the French traders carried on their traffic with the Indians, bartering cloth, muskets, powder and lead, trinkets and a wide assortment of goods for the Indians' valuable furs.

Vestibule—Entrance Hall

From the Trade Room, you pass into the main Vestibule, which, through the use of narrow hallways, leads to all rooms on the first floor. In the rear center of the Vestibule is an old well, incorporated in the work of de Lery and uncovered during restoration in 1927. Leading to the second floor are double stairways, formed from a single newel post for each with unit lifts and treads of solid hewn oak. Over the Vestibule, gracefully curves an exceedingly flat stone arch, designed, along with an identical one on the second floor, to brace against lateral sway of the building caused by cannon fire on the top floor.

Boulangerie—Bakery-Kitchen

Down the hallway to the right as you face the well, is the military kitchen where the first garrison of the "Castle" was fed. Here you will find the crude dough mixer or vat, the massive cooking fireplace and its beehive oven, the oak mess table and other interesting equipment as used by the armies of Louis at Niagara.

Council Chamber

Leaving the kitchen, you pass to the right into Sir William Johnson's famous Council Chamber. It was here that the great Commissioner of Indian Affairs established a provisional capitol in which he might negotiate with the Indians in proper dignity. The room is a splendid example of British treatment of the building, which included paneling, plastering and even placing of English chimney pots on top of the French stacks. It was in this room that Guy Johnson, Col. John Butler and his son Walter, and Capt. Joseph Brant, planned the demoralizing warfare which constantly shattered the hinter-land settlements during the American Revolution. This room has been restored to the British period because of the remarkable history made here by Sir William and his followers, and also to provide the visitor with an idea of the British treatment of the building.

La Prison—Guard House or Garrison Prison

Leaving the Council Chamber by the south door and turning right in the hallway, you will come next to the Garrison Prison, with its simple pine bunks, torture alcove and snake-lock door. You will be interested in the names and dates carved in the window by early French prisoners. This was the only room the French plastered, evidently in order to detect any attempt on the part of the prisoners to dig out.

Magasin au Poudre—Powder Magazine

Note as you pass farther down the hall, how de Lery protected his Powder Magazine from fire by building a stone arch overhead. The magazine was used during the earlier days for storing explosives, but with the advent of Pouchot's larger magazine outside, the smaller one was used as a solitary confinement cell. This latter use also was employed by the British.

Corps de Gards—Guard Room

Passing back, then, through the hall and bearing right, at the foot of the stairway you will enter the Corps de Gards, or Guard Room, used by the French for accommodating the soldier personnel. Note the crude common bed and the musket racks. In the far musket rack, a bulged and broken plank is mute testimony to the accuracy of a British gunner during the War of 1812. In this room and in some of the others, you will find stands of colors as carried by some of the French regiments stationed at Niagara.

La Chapelle—The Chapel

Moving up the right-hand stairway and turning left at the second floor, you will enter the Jesuit Chapel, restored to the condition of de Lery's time. This Chapel is consecrated and services are held here occasionally. Note the original Holy Water Font in the doorway.

Corps de Gards—Guard Room (Second Floor)

Directly across the hall from the Chapel is a Guard Room identical with the one on the first floor and used for the same purposes. It is sometimes referred to as the "off duty" guard room.

Chambres des Officiers—Officers' Chambers

Along the lake side of the second floor are the quarters of the officers. Beginning at the north end (extreme right as you face the Lake) they are as follows: Kitchen, Chamber, small hallway used by guard to assure command of all sides of the building, Adjutant's quarters, Commanding Officer's quarters and La Cabinet or water closet. These rooms have been rehabilitated as others in the building, according to the best information available. They are substantially the same as when occupied by military forces two hundred years and more ago and one is left to imagine little to formulate a striking picture of early Niagara Frontier life.

Place d'Armes—Gun Room

The third or top floor of the "Castle" was used as a gun deck throughout the French, British and early American periods. Behind each dormer shutter was intended to be a gun emplacement, nine on the front of the building, seven at the rear and one on either flank. The French originally mounted small bateaux or swivel guns, such as found there now. An ingenious device is the rope pull for the shutters, allowing the gunners to open and close the ports without exposing themselves to gunfire from without. For the first two years, the building was without a roof, a stone deck, drained by scuppers and pent houses over the stair wells serving to keep out the weather. However, the stone deck was then removed, the building roofed and a hardwood floor laid, while the gundeck was raised around the edges of the room. The third floor was then used as a recreation room.

Many tall tales and true ones might be told about the "Castle." An endless story lives within these gray walls—a story which is felt rather than told—echoing through the years only in the ears of those who really listen while they're here.



12 • RUSH BAGOT MEMORIAL



North of the "Castle," along the Lake Shore, is the Rush-Bagot Memorial, erected and dedicated in 1934 to the International Agreement of 1817, between Great Britain and the United States, which has resulted in a complete disarmament of the Canadian-American border, the second longest international boundary in the world. The dedication was officially effected by

representatives of England, Canada, France and the United States. In the center of the Memorial is a common grave in which are remains of Indians, Frenchmen, Englishmen, Canadians and Americans who died occupying Fort Niagara. The center piece of the Memorial is a complete text of the famous agreement, while flanking the approach are bronze reliefs of Sir Charles Bagot and The Hon. Richard Rush, co-authors of the pact.



13 • THE ANCIENT LOMBARDIES

Near the Memorial still stands at this writing, one of the four old Lombardy poplar trees planted by the French in the early 18th century. Three of the four were existent when restoration began. One was blown down in 1933 and one in 1935. Alongside of the remaining lone sentry, however, are growing rapidly sturdy sprouts from the roots of those that fell. Much has been written and more has been said of these old trees. Some care to think of them as the silent sentinels of the centuries—the only living things that have been witnesses through the romantic years of Old Niagara.



14 • MILLET CROSS

Just beyond the Poplars is a National Monument known as the Millet Cross. It is an eighteen-foot cross in reproduction of one planted nearby by Father Pierre Millet, Jesuit Priest and member of the party which rescued the twelve, half-starved, scurvy-ridden survivors of Fort Denonville's ill-fated garrison, on Good Friday, 1688. Fort Denonville was the second fort at the site of Niagara and was garrisoned by 100 men in the fall of 1687. Scurvy



and starvation, along with unfriendly Indians, reduced the numbers to twelve before the arrival of a rescue party. The present memorial was declared a National Monument by President Coolidge in 1925.



15 • EAST BLOCKHOUSE



Practically identical with the South Blockhouse, described under No. 2, and intended to serve the same purpose, except that it was not a part of the gateway system. The East Blockhouse was built in 1771.



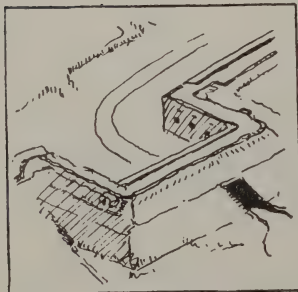
16 • BATTERY OF CARRONADES



Leaving the East Blockhouse and climbing the walk to the top of the ramparts, you will note a battery of three British Carronades, the type of gun used in the early 19th century for close-range work. These guns were declared obsolete during the War of 1812 because of repeated functional failures. They are mounted on typical naval carriages, which often were used in garrison fortification.



17 • RAMPARTS



The Ramparts, extending from the entrance gate to the seawall on the land side of the triangular fort, were built by U. S. Engineers during the Civil War period. They are, however, on identical lines and practically of the same profiles as those built by Pouchot in 1757 and later remodeled and repaired by both British and American forces. A small section of these works was

removed in order to replace the old French entrance and its complement of batteries. At the southerly end of the ramparts, adjacent to the Headhouse, will be found a battery of three 18-pounders of 1841 type, mounted enbarbette, while a salute battery of four American field pieces of the same period are located over the obtuse angle of the ramparts on the right as you face the Outerworks. A second battery of four 18-pounders enbarbatte is located in the corner of the Wall and Ramparts behind Building No. 3. Passing through the center of the Ramparts is a third gate to the Old Fort, known as the Sallyport. Under the French arrangement, a smaller passageway was located at this point and called a Capponiere, which was blocked on the inside at will by a keyed pile of logs, so arranged as to jam the entrance.

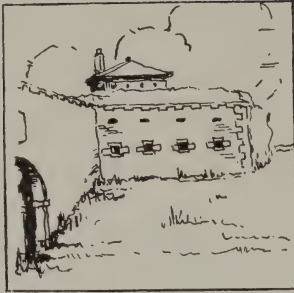


18 • OUTER WORKS

From the top of the Ramparts, you have an excellent view of Pouchot's Outerworks. In the center is the large Ravelin with its complement of Lunettes, moats, covered ways, etc. The northerly Lunette is non-existent because of Lake shore erosion, but the southerly one is complete and an exact duplicate of the missing part to the north. In the apex of the Ravelin angle is a disappearing gun, Comte de Saxe model of 1730, a very interesting fore-runner of our modern coast defense guns, while the flanking guns of the Ravelin are mounted on ordinary naval carriages. Under the French, British and early American periods, both outer and inner works were completely surrounded by moats, the Capponiere being raised sufficiently to provide dry passage, with palisades flanking it.



19 • CASEMATES



At either end of the center section of the Ramparts are entrances to the Casemates, constructed during the Civil War period. The casemates are identical but are not connected with each other by underground passage. In each Casemate will be found four 24-pounder flanking casemate howitzers with modified 1841 carriages. Although it often appears to the layman that these two casemate batteries seem to be intended to fire directly at each other, in fact, each gun is mounted so as to fire directly along and parallel to the face of the fortifications, thus effecting a practically perfect cross fire of eight guns in case of a mass attack or an attempt to scale the walls. Near the entrance to each Casemate is a rack of muskets of the period. Near the far end of each are rifle embrasures and at the extreme end of each is a Powder Magazine. The Casemates were intended to have a personnel of eighty men each for defense purposes.



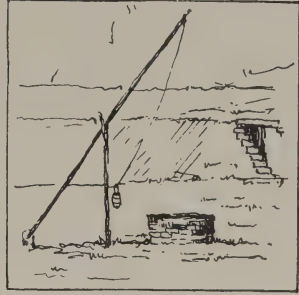
20 • DAUPHINE BATTERY



Walking down the rampart ramp from the Salute Battery and passing across in front of the South Blockhouse (behind Building No. 3) you will find the Dauphine Battery of five French Field Pieces, each behind an earthwork embrasure. This battery was for the purpose of effecting a raking fire across the drawbridge and along the ramp at the main entrance.

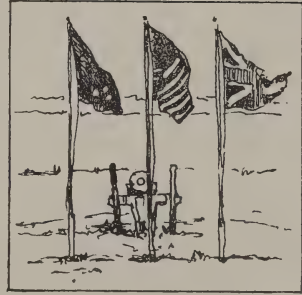
21 • BRITISH WELL

Not far from the Sallyport entrance, just inside the ramparts is an old British well, curbed and equipped with sweep and bucket. It is fairly well established that this Well was dug by the British after they captured Niagara from the French in 1759, probably because the British feared that the French might have poisoned the well in the "Castle" vestibule before evacuating the post.



22 • THREE FLAGS

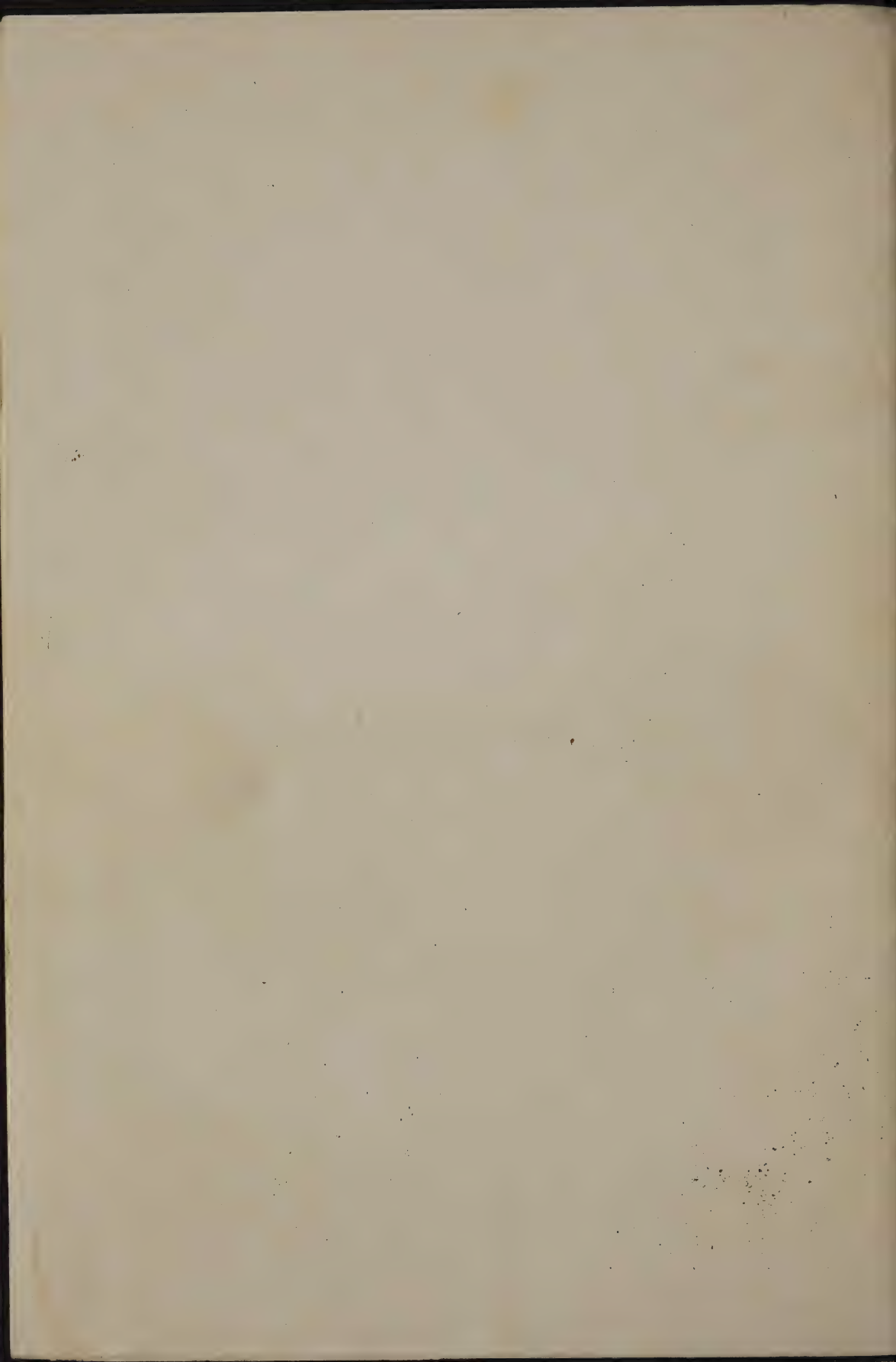
Approximately in the center of the ancient parade of Old Fort Niagara daily fly the colors of three great nations: France, Great Britain and the United States. They are not the modern standards, but those which were first carried here by their respective soldiers. The three golden Fleurs-de-lis first planted here by La Salle in 1679; the flag of King George II, brought to Niagara by Sir William Johnson in 1759; and the Stars and Stripes of 1796, first unfurled at Niagara by a small detachment of American Artillerymen. Over Old Niagara, these three flags fly as a symbol of the fact that this is a striking example of the cosmopolitan interest in the development of America; that this is truly an International Patriotic Shrine; that, through struggle and strife has come lasting peace.



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MAP OF
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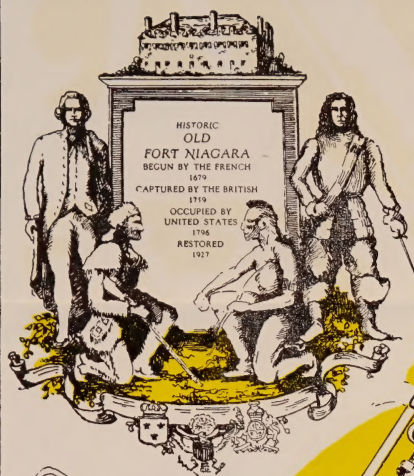




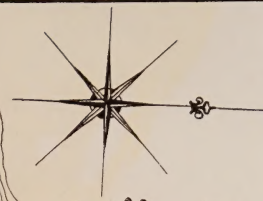


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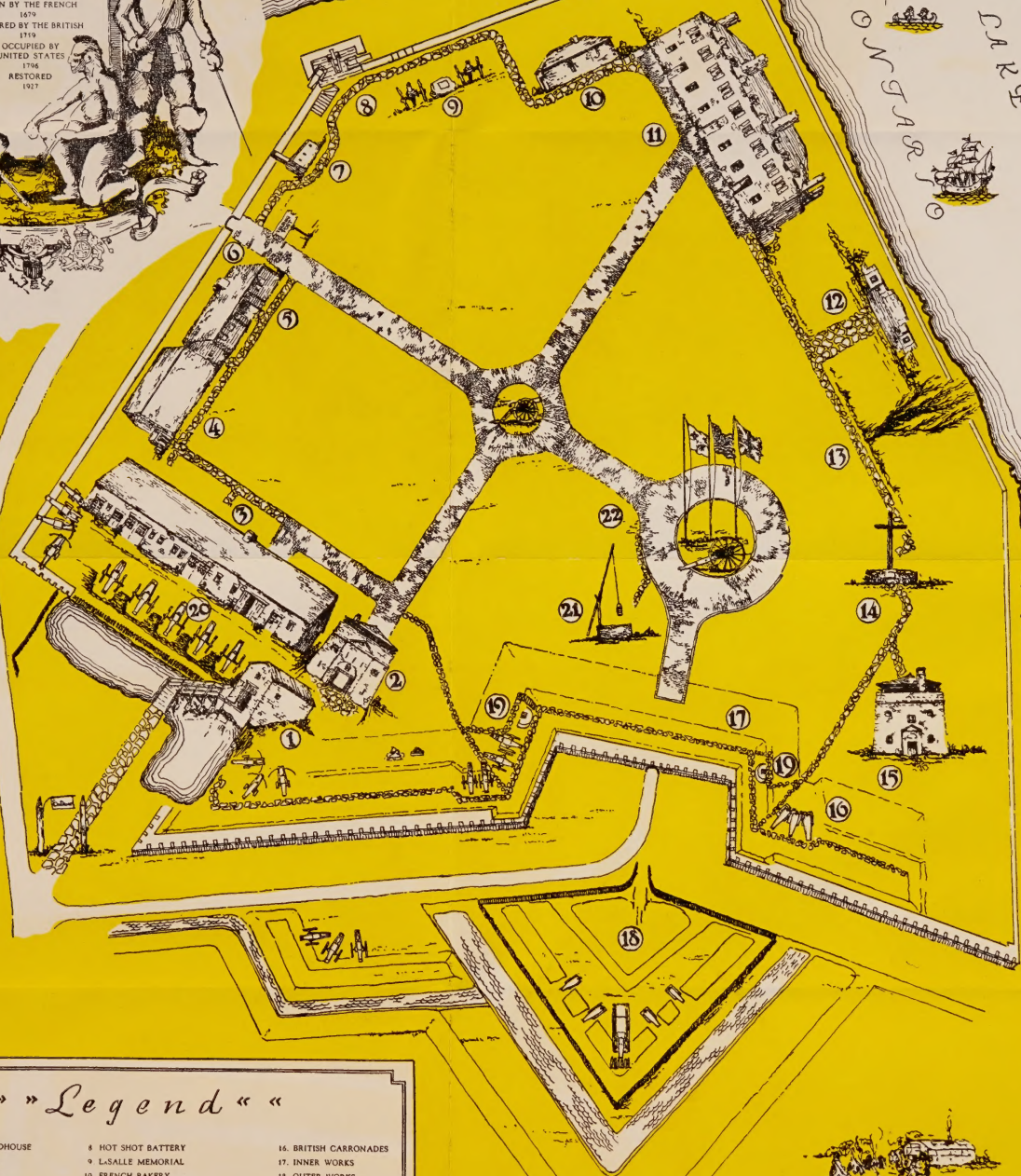


ON GAR

LAKE



NIAGARA



» Legend «

- | | | |
|----------------------------|------------------------|------------------------|
| 1 DRAWBRIDGE and HEADHOUSE | 8 HOT SHOT BATTERY | 16. BRITISH CARRONADES |
| 2 BRITISH BLOCKHOUSE | 9 LISALLE MEMORIAL | 17. INNER WORKS |
| 3 FRENCH STOREHOUSE | 10 FRENCH BAKERY | 18. OUTER WORKS |
| 4 FRENCH POWDER MAGAZINE | 11 FRENCH "CASTLE" | 19. CASMATES |
| 5 ARTIFICER'S CABIN | 12 RUSH-AGOT MEMORIAL | 20. DAUPHINE BATTERY |
| 6 POSTERN GATE | 13 LOMBARDY POPLARS | 21. BRITISH WELL |
| 7 HOT SHOT OVEN | 14 MILLET CROSS | 22. THREE PLAYS |
| | 15. BRITISH BLOCKHOUSE | |



